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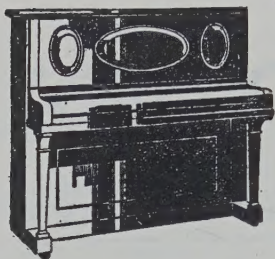
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EDITORIAL

A conventional opening leads sometimes tortuously sometimes straight to the most diverse discussions. Hopefully we seize upon the weather. After a winter—by which we mean abnormally cold or wet weather—that lasted for eight months from September to April, we are now experiencing, after the briefest of respites in the late spring, a broken and cheerless summer. Tourism must be affected, although our overseas friends, whose plans are necessarily far ahead, are with us in large numbers. But more important still are wheat, beet and peat and in the first bad year that their extended programmes have had to face, we hope that any misgivings as to their complete success will be belied.

Trade Unions and employers would do well to reflect on the manner in which the Dublin milk strike was conducted. Discontent with prevailing prices had long ruffled the tempers of the producers—apparently not a very highly organised body. Recourse was had to direct action, however, and after some milk-tilting, one of the shortest strikes we have had, ended in considerably improved conditions for the producers. A system which can be overthrown by spilling milk before the milk-starved cannot be said to be satisfactorily based.

A letter in the daily press from an eminent Dublin surgeon on the use or abuse of the birch was a trenchant commentary on one of our archaic legal survivals. Are six strokes of the birch properly equated to the larceny of a golf ball—the recipient in each case being a boy of fifteen? We shall not spoil the case presented by the learned doctor, who, in deft parries couched in technical phrases, consciously or unconsciously, raised far greater issues than appeared on the surface.

The desirability or otherwise of corporal punishment is usually a subject for school debate. The incident to which the above refers, however, reminds us that whilst in the home or the school sweet reason generally prevails, a third sphere—the great world—also allows corporal punishment on occasion. Here, the complexities induced by the infliction of physical

pain in an undefinable and therefore largely uncontrollable degree on both juveniles and adults by adults, warrant an investigation into the whole question so that on a basis of principle and not of spleen, we may have clear ideas as to whether the ends of justice are thereby attained.

●

An extension of the investigation might very properly deal also with capital punishment. Many countries have abandoned capital punishment, some making an exception in the case of high treason. It cannot be gainsaid that we retain the principle because it is part of England's legacy to us—but where human life is concerned, this is hardly a sufficing reason and there is some obligation on the State to study the principles involved and justify its decision. Incidentally, there is something demeaning and shamefaced, whilst possibly very convenient, in importing our hangman from another country.

●

It is a matter for disappointment that after a decade and a half of virtual self-government no effort should have been made to investigate all these questions and with them, prison reform and the whole problem of punishment and correction. If punishment or vindictiveness alone were intended, such would be rejected by a Christian State. If correction of the delinquent is aimed at, is this possible with the existing machinery?

●

No doubt there is much in the contention of the Government that the "Commission of Inquiry into the Treatment of Political Prisoners" was in the nature of a veiled attack, and certain of the members of the "Commission" would discredit its claim to impartiality. But the point of view which has been expressed in justification of the Government's action, that no private body of citizens or, in fact, no body except Parliament has the right to question or examine any feature of the administration, is utterly indefensible and is so hostile to the whole idea of democracy that it must make every thinking man tremble. Only a few days before, a self-constituted body of Englishmen and women issued a formal report of their findings in regard to the treatment of the political and religious minority in Ulster. This was not only welcomed by Government opinion in the South, it was greeted with enthusiastic back-slapping. The logic which can reconcile these two points of view is bewildering.

It is our stated ambition to make IRELAND TO-DAY the starting-point for the young thinkers of our country in their study of political science or in their approach to the vital problems of the day. We had hoped therefore to present in as unacademic a way as possible a current guide to such subjects as democratic government, sources of authority, dictatorship, bicameral or unicameral government, trades unionism, majority rule, monetary theories and major economic issues. We are glad to note that a well-attended summer school has just concluded its discussions of these very subjects and we think the function a notable one and of most hopeful augury.

●

Among the subjects which we hope to treat of at an early date will be literally the most vital of all subjects—our various population problems—conducted in the form of a symposium. Were any student of the subject asked a year ago for an estimate of the population in the southern twenty-six counties of Ireland—he would unhesitatingly have indicated a substantial increase over the figure of the previous census. If then, as we believe is now possible, anything less is recorded, factors of the gravest import are involved and nothing less than exhaustive examination followed by, if needs be, drastic executive action will meet the case.

●

We have been guilty of vandalism. We had ourselves observed that in despatch to subscribers, our magazine was folded in two and corsetted within a tight wrapper. We objected mildly in the manner of harassed and steamrolled editors, but condoned the offence—perhaps because it meant a penny saved and parsimony is somewhat enforced on us. But we thank the gods that public opinion is not aesthetically dead and still harbours sensibility; and when numerous letters of protest reached us from among others such notables as Mr. St. John Ervine and Professor Trench, we had to do what a vocal public opinion can always effect—mend our ways.

TRADITIONS

Deep in the Pale,
On a sleeping lake
Where the lily floats,
The mute swans sail
Between sleep and awake
Like ivory boats :
Around and about
Slim cypress trees
Stand, to shut out
A faint, warm breeze :
While jade waters double
The trance, and seem
Dream within dream
No thought can trouble.

Driving wearily
Under the gray
And ragged sky
Of Sligo Bay,
Where hard wind tosses
Bittermost spray
By the bleak strand
Of sun-starved Rosses,
The wild swan's wing
Has a hollow sound
Over stony land
And sodden ground :
Why does memory
Trouble the Pale for me ?

An Píutáin.

A FOREIGN COMMENTARY

It was suggested some weeks ago in these notes that it was high time that the Austrians be asked quite simply whether or not they wished to join a German Commonwealth of Nations. Since then it has been announced that Dr. Schussnigg and Herr Hitler have come to an amicable agreement. In effect, Austria is to become part of a new German Commonwealth, and in return she is to be spared any further Nazi propaganda. Already Germany has a pact of non-aggression with Poland, and Mussolini professes himself to be entirely satisfied with the new Austro-German arrangement. Thus Germany has replied to the Franco-Soviet Pact by building up a semblance of a Dictatorship Bloc, from Poland to Italy. While the Petite Entente in general, and Czechoslovakia in particular, may take fright at this alignment of forces, a moment's reflection should show them that the extremities of this line across Europe are but feebly attached to the centre. The Polish-German and the German-Italian agreements are very much *de circonstance* ; and the Petite Entente are now beginning to make overtures to France's new ally, the U.S.S.R. Of France's support they are already assured, at any rate against aggression. A plea, however, that certain minorities in Czechoslovakia be given a chance to choose the state to which they will owe allegiance would probably not be opposed by France at Geneva. The "Dictatorship Bloc" does not constitute, therefore, despite the views of alarmists, a very serious menace to world peace. Indeed, the Austro-German agreement is one which peace-lovers should welcome, all the more when they reflect that some such settlement was imperative and that it might have been obtained by far less civilized means. True, one may be permitted to regret that the Austrian *people* were not consulted in the matter, but then Dictators hate taking risks. Two possible consequences of the agreement are to be envisaged : (1) a commercial treaty between Austria and Germany which might, or might not, benefit Austria's industrial life, but which would certainly help her agriculture ; and (2) a sudden realisation by Austria that only a systematic persecution of her Jewish subjects will enable her to reach true nationhood and a wholesome Aryan prosperity.

* * *

The situation at Geneva is a strange one. Sanctions against Italy have been removed, and Italy remains within the League. Mussolini openly exults, and is more than hopeful of negotiating

a loan, either in Paris or in London, for the further development of his empire. The moral to be drawn is that, in future, aggressors must act more swiftly. Mussolini was, at first, too squeamish; his whole victory might have been jeopardized through his barbarous reluctance to use poison gas at once. Future Civilizers, please note. England, meanwhile, is preparing for war. If Kenya or the Soudan were attacked, economic sanctions would not be enough. So the English taxpayer is invited to pay up. England's policy in future will be to rely rather upon a big Navy than upon having right and fifty allies on her side. Her faith in collective security, if she ever had any, is gone. This she showed in her attitude towards the removal of sanctions: she stated her foreign policy in London *before* meeting the other powers at Geneva. A wise precaution. Unprincipled cynics are asking when she is going to remove sanctions against Ireland too, since they also would appear to be of the punitive order.

Any attempt now to organise world peace under League auspices will resolve itself into a struggle between the German-Italian group and the Franco-Soviet one, while England tries to look as if she has always been a mere spectator. Awkward questions as to the possible redistribution of the earth's surface are so liable to crop up: if you encourage these foreigners at all, before you know where you are they will be expecting you to apply your theories of liberty to your own Empire.

* * *

Of the two Conferences arising from League-approved treaties, that at Montreux seems to have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Fear was expressed that the Black Sea was to become a Soviet lake. England has now, however, agreed to allow Soviet ships access to her Mediterranean, always providing, of course, that they are acting in the interests of the League. England's quondam conception of the "freedom of the seas," as summed up in the refrain of "Rule Britannia," has now been somewhat modified. The Franco-Soviet union has thus been strengthened and the Petite Entente is reconciled to relying thereon for protection. Already Rumania and Czechoslovakia have made plans for an improved railway and transport service between the latter country and the Black Sea. As almost four-fifths of the coast-line on this sea belongs either to Russia or to Turkey, the fact that the views of these two states have prevailed at Montreux would seem altogether reasonable.

* * *

The other Conference, that of the Locarno Powers, has not

met as I write. Indeed, there seems a possibility that this Conference may not be held. Italy has intimated that she will not attend unless Germany is invited at once. There is a certain feeling in France that the transgressor should not sit with the judges, at any rate at the outset. Italy, remembering her position at the League, sees no reason why the self-avowed breaker of a treaty should not sit in judgment upon himself and pronounce himself free of all guilt. The position is a delicate one, but it is unlikely that Blum will prove as intransigent as his predecessors. Germany will probably be asked to attend the Conference at Brussels, despite Hitler's long hesitation in replying to the questionnaire submitted to him. Perhaps he will deign to tell the Conference what his remaining grievances are. The annoying thing is that France seems only too willing to make concessions, if she is told what Germany wants. At home this is extremely bad for Nazi prestige, which is very dependent upon the picture of a Germany surrounded on every side by ruthless and uncompromising enemies.

* * *

The Draft of the new Soviet Constitution, to be considered next November, makes interesting reading. By its supporters it is termed a "stocktaking of liberty" rather than a new departure. Certain of its chapters provide food for thought. For instance, Article 125 tells us, with regard to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and so on: "These rights of the citizens are ensured by placing at the disposal of the toilers and their organisations printing presses, supplies of paper, public buildings, streets, means of communication, and other material conditions necessary for their realisation." That the Government should not merely accord the people a theoretical right to freedom, but should also see to it that they have a reasonable chance of using this right, would doubtless be termed "intolerable state interference" in most democratic countries.

* * *

In the past few weeks readers of one of our leading dailies have been given an intellectual treat. They were first told that Blum could not last a month, then that the strikers had ruined his chances of applying his programme, then that riots were prevalent in France. Then, when Blum had handled the strike situation so smoothly, the same paper remarked: "Blum has bought the strikers off," and hastened to add, for fear one should think that things were quietening down, that the

Socialist leader was "seeking to placate the malcontents by concessions that suggest feelings amounting to panic." The suggestion being, once more, that France was in a parlous state. Those familiar with the Popular Front programme turned in trepidation to the news columns to find out what these panicky concessions were. To their surprise they found that Blum had simply started to put into effect a policy for which he had been elected. For a politician to begin keeping his election promises on the morrow of his election was admittedly startling, but it could hardly be said to be evidence of panic. The end was not yet, however, for we have since had a further editorial on the subject, an illuminating editorial. The writer begins by pointing out that "without any actual distortion of news a newspaper can present a fact in such a way as to give it a totally misleading emphasis, and by judicious selection of news items the public can be misguided completely." We wonder what is coming, and then to our amazement we find, after a few vague remarks about Chicago and the popular press, the following gem: "Just lately, for example, there have been rather frightening reports concerning the condition of affairs in France. The "stay-in" strikes have been treated as if they were the beginnings of another French Revolution In point of fact, while there has been a certain amount of trouble, the ordinary life of the French people has been entirely undisturbed . . . everything in the country is going on just as usual. Reports of the alleged inconveniences that have been suffered by tourists have been grossly exaggerated" But the Riots? the panic of the Government? the instability of the whole régime? The cream of the jest is that the writer naively admits that his latest informant is the French Tourist Bureau. So little faith does he attach, evidently, to the earlier reports circulated by his paper, that he is willing to take without hesitation the word of a Tourist Bureau that he has been entirely misled. The reliance placed by the average reader in such purveyors of "news" is fortunately small. It is worth adding, perhaps, that despite the change of Government in France, our dailies still continue, doubtless via *Reuter* or *Havas*, to quote Right Wing and Popular Front newspapers in a proportion of three to one, a ratio which would appear to be a trifle unfair. "News value" is not always very closely related to fact.

OWEN SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

In a recently published essay on "Modern Education and the Classics" Mr. T. S. Eliot has asserted what may seem to many a glaring paradox. The fundamental defence of the study of Greek and Latin, he says, is their association with the Christian faith and with the Catholic as opposed to the materialistic thesis about life. "If Christianity is not to survive, I shall not mind if the texts of the Latin and Greek languages become more obscure and forgotten than those of the language of the Etruscans." To a very large number of Mr. Eliot's English and American readers, the apodosis of this sentence will seem much more shocking than its protasis. Cases like those of the late Lord Oxford, Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Amery, show how persistent, even in post-war political England, is the love of classical literature, and how short-sighted was Lord Morley's prophecy that Sir William Harcourt would be the last of such scholar-statesmen. The violence of the late nineteenth-century radical attack (of which Lord Morley himself, as Mr. Paul Elmer More has pointed out, was an ambiguous champion) had probably more effect on English religion than on English educational traditions. Christianity, in a famous and often-quoted phrase, has been "defaecated to a pure transparency"; but the Radical's communist successor is still a devotee of Euripides, Plato or Plotinus.

The dissociation between Christianity and the study of the classics is a very ancient tradition. It is probably even pre-Christian in origin, deriving, as I believe, ultimately from the "old feud between philosophy and poetry" to which Plato, here undoubtedly reproducing a genuine Socratic idea, refers in the last book of his *Republic*. The Cynic and Stoic successors of Socrates passed on to the early Church their side of this feud, which turned into one between the new religion and the old literature. In its more extreme forms it led to the rejection

even of grammar itself, and to an implicit theory that fervour made up for all except the narrowest ecclesiastical training. It persisted right up to the Renaissance, which itself was in one sense only the reversal of the picture, the victory of the long-suppressed literature of Greece and Rome over its millennial rival.

The scorn of the Humanists for their uncouth predecessors has remained, in spite of the immense educational work of the Counter-Reformation, a recurrent note in modern classical scholarship. I suppose every child that learns Latin, even in Ireland, is likely to learn also in some obscure way that the Latin he hears every day in the Mass is somehow bad Latin; and if he has any puerile aspirations towards scholarship, he learns even to feel superior to Saint Jerome because the latter uses *quod* or *quia* after a fashion not sanctioned by Bradley's "Arnold." Even in later years, when his Latin has faded far away behind these niceties of usage, he may retain the Renaissance prejudice in the form of a belief that education is hostile to religion. When I was a young student I ventured to doubt this proposition in conversation with a member of the R.I.C. I was crushed by being reminded of the case of Tertullian; and from that day to this I have wondered whether I felt more chagrin at my inability to meet the thrust or admiration for the policeman's portentous learning.

The classics were thus victorious in what might be called the second round of the contest. Unfortunately classical literature on this occasion was accompanied into the fray by a doughty progeny, which turned on its parent after the victory. Science in the seventeenth century, Liberty and Philosophy in the eighteenth, Liberalism, Evolutionism, Agnosticism in the nineteenth, are all the undoubted products of the revival of Greek learning in the sixteenth. Together, not only in Protestant lands, but almost to an equal degree in France, they aided the renewed enthusiasm for the classics to triumph over the medieval Catholic synthesis. During

the past century or so, one of the latest of the brood, Utilitarianism, has organised its brethren against their own progenitor. Before the great war one heard almost as much of the quarrel between science and the Classics as of that between Science and Religion. It is hard to say which of the two quarrels was the more wrong-headed ; for just as modern science is erected upon a solid basis of Greek, so the Catholic Church has been the preserver alike of what was best in the Greek view of the world and of the literature in which that view was expressed. Side by side with the obscurantism inherited from Diogenes and Socrates went another tendency, derived rather from Plato through Clement of Alexandria and Origen : the idea of Christianity as itself the highest and greatest of the philosophies, requiring for its fullest understanding all the resources of intellectual training as well as the supernatural gift of faith. Nowhere is the fusion of Christian, Platonic, and Cynic tendencies more admirably exemplified than in St. Basil's oration *On the Reading of Profane Authors*.

One of the strangest effects of the Renaissance was the manner in which it revived, along with Greek letters, old Greek problems, which had lost their meaning with Christianity. As I have pointed out, the feud between philosophy and poetry was one of these ; it had indeed passed into Christianity in a slightly different form, but only as an extreme expression of rigorist mentality. Whereas Socrates, being an ethical revolutionary, was right in marking as hostile to his doctrine the traditional moral teachers of Greece, medieval Christianity had achieved in Dante the finest synthesis of poetry and philosophy ever made. In the post-Renaissance quarrel, the roles of the participants were curiously reversed, for now it was the men of learning and the philosophers who stood for the ethics of paganism. The feud between science and religion, again, was very natural in the fifth century B.C., when science meant rationalism and religion was a mixture of State-worship with the most primitive superstitions. Greek science was identical with

philosophy, and in fact it won its contest with Greek religion. Christianity had to make its chief struggle, not with ancient paganism, but with ancient philosophy, and it won in its turn not by annihilating its rival, but by Christianising it. In post-Renaissance times, the feud was not between science and superstition as men thought ; it was the old quarrel between philosophy and poetry disguised, for Christianity, as men like Clement and Augustine saw, was the crown of philosophy, and the new scientists were in fact reviving the exploded ethics of pagan poetry.

In a remarkable recent book, *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany*, Miss E. M. Butler has studied the deleterious effects on subsequent German literature of Winckelmann's discovery of Greek art in the middle of the eighteenth century. From Goethe's "daimon" through Nietzsche's superman down to Stefan George's tragi-comic cult of the youthful Maximin, the result of this renewed contact with Greece has been to give the modern German writer an impulse towards a sort of cloudy and sensational mythologising, which has indeed not stopped short at literature—such impulses never do—but has, for instance, helped enormously to produce an erratic hypostatization of the superman in the person of Adolf Hitler. Miss Butler purports to view this curious psycho-pathological development from the firm vantage-point of the Anglo-Saxon mind. Her Anglo-Saxonism is revealed rather in the success with which she fails to see the beam in the Anglo-Saxon eye ; for it could equally well be shown how from Milton down through Shelley, Byron, and Keats to Swinburne, the renewal of contact with Hellenic paganism was the source of endless and often very fatal confusions in the English literary mind, and how often English politics have been vitiated by the same pagan taint.

The truth of the matter is that any approach to Greek literature or art other than the broad historical path that goes through Christianity is apt to lead into a moral morass. Greek paganism was very unequal in quality to the rationalism which

led to its rejection and helped in its ultimate supersession by Christianity. It went through a long and strange history, mostly of slow decay and corruption, ending in the melancholy jumble of antiquarian charlatanry that we find in the Emperor Julian. Its final expression is the brutal hedonism that so strikes the reader in the Greek Anthology, and the nihilism of the famous couplet of Glycon: "all is laughter, and all is dust, and all is nothing; for out of unreason is all that is." The revival of pagan ideas that went so often hand-in-hand with the Renaissance has led modern humanity on a similar progress through a forest of beauty haunted by hideous phantoms into an arid desert of brutality and cynical despair. Glycon's couplet is too frequently taken, however, to be a complete expression of the Hellenic view. There is a strange contrast between it and the clear-eyed acceptance of mortality that we find in Homer and Sophocles, or the cry of the nurse in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, which I take to be the finest utterance on man's need for a revelation that is to be found in any non-Christian literature:

" But if any far-off state there be
Dearer to life than mortality
The hand of the Dark hath hold thereof
And mist is under and mist above
And so we are sick for life and cling
On earth to this nameless and shining thing
For other life is a fountain sealed
And the depths below us are unrevealed
And we drift on legends forever."

(G. Murray's translation).

The revival of enthusiasm for Greek literature in Western Europe during the fifteenth century was unfortunately given a certain bias towards the worst elements in ancient paganism at its very outset. In part the way was prepared for this by the political and moral confusion that reigned in Italy at the time. It happened also that one of the men who did most to fire Italian devotion for things Greek was not only an enthusiastic Platonist, but almost a reincarnation of the neo-platonism of

the fourth century. He was Gemistos Plethon, who accompanied the Emperor John Palaeologos to the Council of Ferrara in 1438, and suggested the foundation of the famous Platonic Academy at Florence. A violent anti-Aristotelian, he helped to prepare the way for the decay of Scholasticism. But he was more than a mere philosopher ; he was also a visionary, author of one of the earliest modern " Utopias " in which the ideal human life was described and in which at the same time an attempt was made to suggest the restoration of paganism in its neo-platonic form on the ruins of Christianity. More perhaps than any other man, Plethon thus early gave the Renaissance a tendency towards infidelity which it was never wholly to lose. It is to this strangely irrational and semi-romantic pre-occupation with the more morbid aspects of paganism in its last degeneration that we owe the fact that what should have been wholly a blessing became in part a curse. The " second humanism " of eighteenth century Germany was naturally enough implicated, owing to the religious conditions of the time, in the same aberrations. It was only in the nineteenth century that scholarship succeeded in distinguishing fully between what was healthy and what was evil in Greek thought, a task in which the medieval philosophers had already achieved success, in so far as their interests left it open to them, before the Renaissance began. When historical science came to play its part, it was already too late. Wilamowitz's famous polemic against Nietzsche in 1872 had no literary effect, and Wilamowitz himself was true to the spirit of his age in making his *Wissenschaft* into a kind of Absolute with semi-religious qualities.

I was recently asked by a young graduate who was a candidate for the Civil Service to suggest an answer to a question which he said had been put to one of his comrades at an interview. The question was a banal one enough : " Why do people study Greek and Latin ? " I suggested of course that it permitted of several good answers ; but the one which I put first in value rather surprised the candidate, and I am not sure that it might

not surprise his examiner as well. It was that we study these languages because they provide us with the most direct and intimate approach to a complete knowledge of the Christian faith. Latin is the language of the Catholic liturgy, and Greek is the language in which the New Testament was first written, the Old Testament made known to Europe, and the Christian creeds composed. In order to appreciate these simple facts, it is not necessary for us to go all the way with Mr. Belloc in his famous dictum that "the Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith," nor to hold mystical views about the providential destiny of the Roman Empire. The relation of Christianity to European civilisation is a very far-reaching historical question. It has been raised in perhaps its most acute form, but not yet fully answered, by Professor Arnold Toynbee in his great work "A Study of History." Any future satisfactory answer to it must, I think, take account of his thesis, but the subject cannot be discussed in a brief article.

Mr. Eliot has suggested in passing, in the essay above referred to, that the study of Greek and Latin is still supremely important for those who intend to concern themselves with literature, whether as writers or otherwise. It is almost equally important for students of history, both ancient and medieval, and for those who wish to get an educated grasp of any modern western language. Probably the least impressive argument in its favour nowadays is that which most impressed the Renaissance: that it imparts a taste for the purely classical style. It is not true to say that this argument is valueless, but it is now greatly excelled by the historical one, even in the case of literature itself. Our approach to literary questions can no longer be merely stylistic, but must be comparative. Indeed the purely stylistic devotion to the classics was second only to the pagan nostalgia as a defect in the Renaissance attitude. In any case, the Christian argument is infinitely more important than any of these from the general educational standpoint. Not everyone must be a writer or student in the sense in which

everyone must be a Christian ; the Renaissance emphasis on purity of style was essentially an aristocratic ideal, whereas the way of approach through the New Testament, chosen by Erasmus, St. Thomas More and their fellows, but soon abandoned, is open to all recipients of a good general education. Still more is this the case with the Latin of the liturgy, with which every schoolboy must have some slight degree of familiarity.

The greatest of the pagan authors, whose study can hardly ever be popular, are themselves best approached by modern Christian students not primarily for their high aesthetic value, but as a *praeeparatio evangelica*, especially in the ethical sense. Education as a training for life, apart from specialist study, is surely first and foremost religious and ethical in character. There can be no full understanding of the Greek and Latin masterpieces except from the standpoint of religion and ethics, for they are saturated in the superstitions, the strivings and aspirations, the virtues and vices of their authors and those for whom they were composed. Any consideration of these fundamental aspects, however, is radically wrong unless it starts out from Christian truths. Seen in the light of the Christian completion, the story of pagan religion and ethics becomes not only philosophically but historically intelligible. Christianity came not to destroy, but to fulfil ; its doctrines were applied to the strengthening of what was weak in Hellenism, and wherever it was possible to do so, it preserved the ancient formulation. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the case of the old Greek cardinal virtues of wisdom, temperance, justice and fortitude, so often discussed by Plato. Without Christianity it is clear that everything good in Greek and Roman political and personal life would have gone down in ghastly failure. On the other hand, the Christian creeds and the impregnable structure of Christian theology and metaphysics were fashioned by men whose minds were indelibly coloured by the ancient Greek experience and the Greek habit of thought. Plato and Aristotle are the essential link between Greek classical

literature, poetry no less than prose, and the systems of St. Augustine, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas.

The earliest approach to Latin, if its study, as Mr. Eliot suggests in his essay, is to be dissociated from "a traditional public school system, a traditional university system, a decaying social order" should thus be through the Missal and Hymnals of the Church, which indeed in themselves provide materials for a thorough acquaintance with the language. Only at a later stage should the student be introduced to Caesar, Livy and Cicero, or Virgil and Horace, and then not from the classical or stylistic point of view, but from the historico-comparative. If the day is past when men solaced their declining years with the rather contradictory blend of private cynic and public propagandist that is revealed in Horace's poems, the majestic Western liturgy is only now beginning to be fully appreciated by a wide public. It was always difficult to get schoolboys to like Caesar or to revel in the *De Officiis* of Cicero. A wide selection from the New and Old Testaments, as used in the Missal, would both be infinitely more interesting and have a moral and educational value such as can only be extracted from Cicero by the maturest minds. The argument one still strangely hears, to the effect that reading the Vulgate would spoil the pupil's Latin style, was a foolish argument even in the sixteenth century; it is blank nonsense to-day, implying as it does that the object of learning Latin is not to be able to read but to write it.

The method of approach here outlined should bring Latin within the reach even of the higher classes in National Schools. It would not be a hopeless ideal, in view of the immense attractiveness of the object, that all laymen and women should have some acquaintance at least with the plainer parts of the Latin Mass. The same method could be applied to the study of Greek. It should begin with the memorising of the Lord's Prayer and the reading of Gospel parables and narrative passages, and go on through a selection from the easier parts

of the Septuagint to a study of the simpler Epistles. Only after some such initiation should the student be brought to Attic Tragedy or Homer, or even to Herodotus or Plato. The difficulty of arousing interest is not nearly so great in the case of classical Greek as in that of classical Latin, but here again the really educative value of the New Testament gives it enormous advantages, and the dialect difficulty is the same from whatever end you set out. Much of the Gospels are as easy as any Greek there is. There has recently been a practice of setting at our secondary school examinations alternative passages drawn from St. Clement of Alexandria and other Fathers side by side with classical authors. I believe this practice to be unsound, both in the case of Greek and in that of Latin, for the Fathers are very difficult reading and not always highly interesting unless for specialists. In any case they have not the same direct value and close appeal that the Missal and the Gospels possess, bound up so intimately as these are with personal religious life.

Mr. Eliot sees in the revival and expansion of monastic teaching orders the only hope for the study of Latin and Greek in their proper place and for the right reasons. In Ireland this first consideration is already present. All that is further needed is a clearer historical grasp of the function which the classical languages can uniquely fulfil, not merely in the secular sphere but in providing the religious and ethical nucleus that is more essential in modern education than ever before.

MICHAEL TIERNEY

THE PHILOMATH SINGS

It began with the hedge-schoolmaster, the attempt to fill the void left by the decay of creation in the Gaelic. This is in the latter half of the eighteenth century. He is really a deserter, blood brother to Falstaff. He has left the line held by Gaelic poetry as long as Gaelic poetry itself survived and it survived for long after there was any hope of a return in Ireland to the 'civilisation of its singing. But he is broader, more European. To the classics he adds something out of Voltaire perhaps and Rousseau, and firebrand Republicanism out of Paine. In principle a democrat, he is no friend to the Government and the Government looks on him with the same eye that Spenser, planter-colonist, turned on the Gaelic poets of his time, finding them, "most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious disposition," urging the clans to "the maintainance of their own lewde libertie." But they belonged to a different order. Gaelic poetry never forsook the hope that there might again be kings in Cashel, and as that hope became more and more vague in reality, as a motif it was loaded with ornament more lavish and finely wrought. The Philomath knows this poetry, but its bitterness is dead for him. He belongs rather to the beginnings of the new Ireland that flourished in O'Connell, the Ireland of the demagogue, of the full rotund period, of national jerry-building and false fronts.

But to return to the man himself; roused, his manner is Johnsonian; in repose he is suave and smooth as a medieval prelate, fond of good living and casuistry, of old books, old wine (there was still a trade with Spain from Kerry ports without much interference from revenue officers). He is a true, earnest believer, protagonist of Mother Church, enemy of heretics. In lines, probably autobiographical:

"Who like him could relate the retreating Mahommedan,
In writing the Alkoran who guided his pen?
There's not a man in truth from the sea to the Severn
From that vain circle to the island of France

Could Arius confute with young Anthony O'Halloran,
Confounding all heretics who dares to advance."

But besides ranging himself on the side of the fathers and the councils, he has a sneaking regard for old epicurean gods, loved, too, of the Renaissance, looking on them as angels truant from the ordered paradise of the orthodox. He may even think their truancy providential, to confound the greedy, nose-to-grindstone men of shops and money affairs, by tempting their sons to spending in taverns and loitering with Amaryllis in the shade. This democrat does not see far ahead in democracy. Or perhaps his democracy is merely against the Government; though, indeed, this is not likely, for he has been accused of extolling the wisdom of the Greek and Roman commonwealths to add weight to the more modern Republican propaganda.

But primarily the hedge-schoolmaster is strongest in the classics. Self-described Philomath, his school is anywhere in Munster, in Tullylease or Knocknagashel, Inchageelagh or Knockraha. His school has assembled from all over Ireland, boys and men from far backward places in Donegal and Antrim and Mayo. They have come to Munster to get enough of the Latin to carry them through the Colleges of Douai or Salamanca. The schools are held in honour by the people. The students have free lodging and food. They will ship one day on a smuggler from some wild Kerry port and the people will welcome their return as priests. So the poor scholar is a privileged person, cared for and fostered even in a time of famine and want. One has been known to travel the length of Ireland, spend several years at the schools in Munster and in that time never have the spending of half a crown.

Sometimes in his wandering the Philomath will meet other men of his ilk. It is not a meeting, it is a convention. It is not a private, chance coming together of two private individuals. It is rather a public function, a synod whose findings will have echoes in every glen in Munster. It may be productive of epigram, a couplet in hexameters in Latin or bog-Latin, that

will be carried in mouths bubbling with laughter to His Grace in Cashel, and travel, in time, to be retold among their scarlet eminences under the Roman basilicas. The meeting place is maybe a windy hovel, a shebeen with grazing for a goat on the thatch. Here they sit, back grounded by walls stained to the colour of old parchment by turf smoke and drop-down. But whiskey and even more potent intoxication of words overcome the surroundings. The mind may even find prouder exaltation by contrast, and when the hostess tries to shut out the blast by stuffing the broken window with straw and old clothes, one philomath commemorates the event in the couplet :

“Est domum windosa, est et landladia longa
Soppibus et cloutis cupiens stoppare fenestris.”

There, sitting over punchbowl, they will dispute over a Latin quantity or take sides in a controversy last heard among the pillars of the Academy. They will have a piper or a fiddler if he is to be found and pay him in whiskey. Welcome payment, for the production of music is a thirsty business. They will call for jig or reel, for *suantraighe*, *goltraighe* or *gairtraighe*, according to their mood, and the fiddler will give of his best, his finest raptures, the utmost of his virtuosity; for the praise of poets and learned men is a diploma, a warrant of excellence, and their censure is damning even to oblivion. A fiddler under such anathema is no more to music than an empty hollow-sounding shade disconsolate in the darkness outside conviviality and good fellowship.

Or they will make songs to the Irish tunes, learned songs, using all their ingenuity and erudition; qualities called into verse when literature is of the salon, as it was everywhere in the eighteenth century. It may be a love song, and the lady's beauty is celebrated in the lines :

“In the flowery month of May, when the lambkins sport
and play,
As I roved to receive recreation,
I espied a comely maid, sequestered in a shade
On her beauty I gazed with admiration.

Had Alcides seen her face, before Dejanira's grace
 He could ne'er be consumed in the cedars ;
 Nor would Helen prove the fall of the Grecian leaders all
 Nor would Ulysses be the Trojan invader."

There are many such songs, remembered still in many parts of the country. They must be read with a classical dictionary in the hand and English as pronounced by the Elizabethans on the tongue. Then, English, as the philomath knew it, was not the chastened tongue we have to-day, but the language of Grattan's orations, of Flood and Hussey Burgh. Also his knowledge of it was mostly book-knowledge and it was used by him rather as a ceremonial language. He is trying to do with it what the Gaelic poet did with literary Irish. The Gaelic poet knew his craft and inherited a language of poetry at once copious and refined. The work in it is over-ornate, over-designed, labouring arpeggio and arabesque. It is exquisite, *fin-de-siècle* poetry, and, I suppose, it was, indeed, a *fin-de-siècle* soul which produced it. But outside the classics, it was the only literature known to those writers in the English within the hidden Ireland. Singing of woman, the form and metre of the *aisling* is nearest to hand, as in this song, called *The Colleen Rue* :

"As I roved out on a summer's morning, aspeculating most
 curiously,
 To my surprise I soon espied a charming fair one approach-
 ing me.
 I stood awhile in deep meditation, contemplating what
 I should do,
 Till at last recruiting all my sensation, I thus accosted the
 Colleen Rue.

"Are you Aurora, the Goddess Flora, Artemidora or Venus
 bright ?
 Or Helen fair beyond compare whom Paris stole from
 Grecian sight ?
 Oh, fairest creature, you have enslaved me, I'm intoxicated
 in cupid's clew,
 Your golden sayings are infatuations that have ensnared
 me, a Colleen Rue."

“Kind Sir, be aisy, and do not tease me with your false
 praises most jestingly,
 Your dissimulation and invocation are vaunting praises
 alluring me,
 I’m not Aurora, the Goddess Flora, but a rural female for
 all to view,
 That’s here condoling my situation, my apellation the
 Colleen Rue.”

“Oh, were I Hector the noble victor who died a victim to
 Grecian skill,
 Or were I Paris whose deeds are various, an arbitrator on
 Ida’s hill,
 I’d range through Asia, likewise Arabia, Pennsylvania
 seeking for you,
 The burning regions like Sage Orpheus to see your face
 my sweet Colleen Rue.”

The music in this is everything and the music is that of Irish poetry. Everything is sacrificed to sound and colour. It may be laughable and indeed the parodies written by men of “refinement and sensibility” rarely surpass the originals in comedy. But there is exuberance in them and courage. Set your English poet, with his French of Stafford-atte-Bow to compose a love song in French and note the thin figure he will cut. He will be timid. He will keep to the limits of his knowledge and produce a thing, thin, soundless and lifeless. Then the Philomath verse-maker came upon English from the Latin side and took most kindly to the juiciest polysyllables. This, too, became the internal rhyming in the Gaelic metre called for long and full vowel sounds.

Irish poetry had the instinct to live by patronage. Even when the Gaelic aristocracy was gone the poet often celebrated the supplanter in ode or epithalamium. One at least of the philomaths tried to turn the new learning to account, for money or for honours or perhaps for both, and wrote *Castlehyde*, celebrating the penates of one Mr. Hyde, who lived near Fermoy in the County Cork :

“As I roved out on a summer’s morning, down by the banks
 of Blackwater side,
 To view the groves and the meadows charming, the pleasant
 gardens of Castlehyde,
 ’Tis there I heard the thrushes warbling, the dove and
 partridge I now describe,
 The lambkins sporting on every morning, all to adorn
 sweet Castlehyde.”

The song is an enumeration of the blessings and beauties of the place and no mention of the owner. It may have been too scrupulous a conscience, honesty too nice, for such insincerity. The place is extolled beyond all places in Ireland, the Philomath making music out of place names :

“I rode from Blarney to Castlebarnet, to Thomastown and
 Doneraile,
 To Killashannick that joins Rathcormack, beside Killarney
 and Abbeyfeale ;
 The flowing Nore and the rapid Boyne, the river Shannon
 and pleasant Clyde,
 In all my ranging and serenading, I met no equal to Castle-
 hyde.”

But Mr. Hyde was not pleased and sent this laureate of his domains away empty. The Big House laughed and the drawing rooms of Cork city howled and Richard Millikin, the wit, had much applause for his parody : *The Groves of Blarney*. But the philomath had his revenge, on Hyde at any rate. He changed the last line to :

“In all my ranging and serenading, I met no naygur but
 lumpy Hyde.”

The hedge schoolmasters are among the first deserters from the hidden Ireland, atavistic, aristocratic, that clung still to the ideal of a civilisation, like to that which Lawrence found among the Arabs. Irish poetry clung to this ideal when the dynasties were already a hundred years destroyed and the tribes reduced in the melting pot of famine to the luxury of an occasional faction fight. Even in 1798 the poet will try to unite the rabble with a taunt, old as six centuries, that the people are :

"San ceangal cumann cleibe, ná caradhas do deanam
 Act a'stao is as mille a ceile san géille don cóir" (1)

But that Ireland thwarted the sweet purposes of progress and was doomed to defeat, to give way before the machine and the ant-civilisation of capitalist democracy. And to-day the civilisation of the city is becoming world civilisation. The ant march is on, armed with machine weapons against body and soul. On to Megalapolis !

The nineteenth-century passion for education began it ; its passion to bring its own murky light into the dark souls of peasant and mujik and of fellaheen, clayey denizens of the ignorant fields.

Oh proud century of enlightenment, when the naphtha flares of science magnified themselves to pillars of light to lead mankind out of the bondage of medievalism and superstition. So sure were they of the approaching millenium that they must send education to make conduits to carry the flood from Crystal Palace to the backwoods and the hill-fastnesses.

But the grand simplification, the potent solvent of all our woes and doubts and tribulations ! Where is it ? Did the millenium of enlightenment dawn while we crouched over the spinning jenny ? Was it lost in the glare of the furnaces ? Or is this really the enlightenment, this new vulgarity, this new crude epicureanism that sends to Ultima Thule and the farthest Indies for lark's tongues to whet its jaded appetite. Is the new enlightenment the old bread and games ?

EDWARD SHEEHY.

(1) míceál Óg O longáin R.I.A. 23924

‘NOT AS THE EAGLE’

Not as the eagle, not as the racing feet of morning,
not as the wild surge of cockcrow
are the events we chronicle in the mind.
The word darting in and out of the mind
a deft squirrel.
the rabbits slung on counters, country mud on their paws,
the held posture at street corners,
all inconsequential unedited data
leave us with no picture, no poem.

We cannot say,
This we have seen, and this.
We cannot remember what we have meant to remember, saying :
We will think of this at another time, saying :
We will store this winter tree up in the mind,
a Japanese print ;
We will not forget how she stood by the window
crucified in the sunlight,
We will remember the poem in the train,
the wheels thumping a symphony, saying, too :
All that we see is gathered like honey,
All that we hear is stored for the Winter,
harvested, gathered, laid by and waiting,
Who could forget the phrase murmured over
between sleeping and waking, who could forget ?

But we have forgotten, mislaid, forgotten.
Reading the library book, looking at films,
talking and laughing we forget our dreaming,
erase from the mind the pencilled impressions.
A Murder or Four Deaths In An Air Crash are fresher
than eagle poised on pinnacle of air.

DONAGH MACDONAGH.

TOLERATION AND PERSECUTION

A Lay Sermon.

"Sua si bona norint."

MUSING upon Mussolini, the Council of Civil Liberties, the I.R.A.—and "all that," I fell to thinking some time since how blessed are we who dwell in Northern Ireland—potentially. For what at bottom is wrong with totalitarians but their lust for community of sentiment and behaviour, and what in the end is more right with the Six Counties than the saving certainty that their inhabitants can never be agreed?

Civilization, broadly conceived, is the power of comprehending human variation. We begin with the primary human difference of the sexes—"male and female created He them"—and observe that the best rough index of civilisation is the freedom and respect recorded reciprocally by man to woman and by woman to man. We proceed to differences of religion, of colour, of occupation, of manners, tastes, and morality and find that civilization is, indeed, what it is etymologically—the power of treating your next door neighbour as a fellow townsman, of transcending in the spirit of humanity vagaries and varieties of the human heart.

How may this be accomplished? "By toleration," it has been said: but—toleration is not enough. Toleration is, for the most part, a chill, negative device leading us to put up with what we dislike and sometimes, incidentally, to dislike what we put up with. Leaving us free to disapprove, to dislike, to fear what differs from us, it survives precariously and partially by convention or by balance of power. Shift the convention, alter the balance of power, increase by but a little moral fervour, instil a modicum of terror: toleration puffs off like smoke and all is to do again. Confronted with a Hitler, a Mussolini or any other simple soul who "needs must love the highest" when he sees it, the tolerant of the twentieth century are as

baffled in argument as were their ancestors in face of Loyola and Calvin.

Ireland, if a foreigner who has lived there many years may presume to say so, is emphatically a tolerant country: its people, it might be held, are predisposed to tolerance by their history: for external influence and control have fostered distrust of legal coercion. There has been, through all, too little freedom of self determination for the mass to fash itself as to the direction which the individual may take. South or North, provided he keeps within certain limits and these neither exceptionally strait nor difficult of understanding, a man may think and speak and act as he chooses, meeting nothing worse than mannerly contempt or good-humoured amazement. But the same facts of external pressure which have fostered practice of toleration in regard to nugatory or inessential variation have tended, perhaps, to inhibit growth of reverence and respect for variation *per se*. When a variation appears it makes *all* the difference whether our primary reaction is "och, it doesn't matter" or "there may be something in it." Those august, persistent, psychological cleavages which are the ultimate objection to totalitarian ideals are, perhaps, no better apprehended in Ireland than elsewhere. Ireland is tolerant, but here as elsewhere, toleration would seem often to crumble just when it might be of some serious use.

If community of feeling and behaviour were truly to be desired we should be committed, logically, to persecution, except in so far as it may lower the standard or increase (instead of diminishing) the differentiation of feeling and behaviour. Persecution has, in fact, been arraigned on both these counts—both for lowering the morale of a community and for extending and intensifying opposition within it. It is not unplausible to suppose that Protestant persecution of Catholicism and Catholic persecution of Protestantism have debased both religions and made both more extreme. So, too, it may be with the opposition between law and crime. Yet we shall strive in vain by such

musings to close our ear to the siren whisper, that such ill results of persecution have been due to defective or ill-chosen methods of coercion. We shall still lack a *logical* basis for the defence of freedom. In plain language, so long as Protestants believe that a Protestant world would be better than one mixed of Protestant and Catholic, so long as Catholics entertain the parallel belief—so long may persecution slumber but by no means be laid finally to rest. And so with white and black, Aryan and Jew, industrious and idle.

It may seem ridiculous to suggest, at this time of day, that Protestant or Catholic should cease to regard his religion as "the only pebble on the beach," or that white man or yellow, Jew or Aryan, should pay similar homage to objective probability. Most certainly no labouring of the case for toleration can ever effect this change. It must be wrought, if at all, by direct assault on the judgments and emotional reflexes which by inducing persecution create the need for toleration.

Men who have never been Christians and who are not appalled by Christianity in all its forms must, one imagines, be puzzled by the general failure of Protestants to admire and appreciate Catholicism and *vice versa*. Even so, could we conceive of a human being who was colourless or parti-coloured, he would surely find it odd that black look ugly to white, and white to black. Why, in a word, should *difference* so generally engender distaste? And, again, if generally, why not universally? Why do men not hate women and women detest men? The fact that the "war of the sexes" is not a wholly meaningless term suggests to us that here, too, the *tendency* for difference to engender distaste most probably exists but is restrained by the presence of some composing factor unfortunately wanting in other fields. Nor is it difficult to discover that factor. The sexes make, if not the best, at least something of each other because neither of them alone can continue the human race. It does not so seem impossible that the whole world might become Catholic or Protestant, Black or Yellow, and there is not, therefore, the

same inducement to make the best of that "bad business" a world divided in religion or of pie-bald hue.

The present writer well remembers his indignant amazement upwards of thirty years ago when it was first suggested to him that native Indians were beautiful; how years still went by before he could himself perceive that beauty: how many more years elapsed before the beauty of the negro races dawned upon him. These enrichments of his faculties have not bred in him any yearning to thicken his own lips, snub his nose or colour his skin: still less any contempt for or denigration of the beauty of his own kind. May we not imagine that even so a Protestant might come gradually to praise God for the qualities of Catholicism, a Catholic to perceive that mankind is all the better for the self-styled Free Churches? Might not even the industrious give thanks that other men are not as they, and virtue extend due meed of admiration to crime? Yes: even the tramp and the criminal are as they are made, have their place and fulfil their function in human society. The average sensual man would be more puzzled even than he is by some of his impulses could he not read their nature and tendency clearly in individuals whom they more exclusively control.

Such dreams are no part of the spirit of toleration, for toleration leaves us free to indulge contempt and disapproval, it hinders only the expression of ill-feeling. And it may often happen that because men so inhibit themselves in cases where expression of the feeling would be dangerous or would offend tradition, they will exceed in violence towards variations which neither force nor tradition protect. The one true remedy for persecution is to love what has been hated. But is this possible? Is it even in part or in whole desirable? Is there an escape from that grim perversion: "we needs must see the highest when we love it?"

Yet the fact that value absolute is beyond his reach nowhere excuses man from striving towards it, and toleration is dangerous in so far as the ease and indolence to which it conduces inhibit

effort to cast out hate. We are left, however, with the question whether the proposed objective is in part or in whole desirable : *ought* the black races to attempt to admire the white, or rival churches to recognise each that the way of the other is no less excellent than its own? It is not, be it observed, a matter of recognising virtue in individuals of a different complexion or faith, nor even of admitting elements of value in a thing judged to be second-best. Catholics and Protestants are capable enough of friendship or an even more intimate tie with individuals of a different church, and many Christians believe that every Christian sect has at least so much value as to make it less evil than atheism. An atheist might be pardoned for supposing it to be some part of his duty to eradicate this or that aspect of humanity. He might argue, not altogether unplausibly, that he had found a wilderness and was ordering a garden. It is the height of paradox, however, for those who believe in a Creator to act as though God needed their assistance to "vet. the job." No doubt we may attempt to repress occasional or accidental aberrations without exposing ourselves to a charge of spiritual or intellectual pride, but to feel and act as though august and persistent heresy were less a part of the divine scheme than religion "takes the bun."

What is needed is, then, no less than the ultimate sacrifice of self—the understanding that our own ideals, the values we perceive most clearly and feel most deeply may be no better than the values most clearly perceived, most deeply felt by others ; with the corollary that in so far as institutions, churches, races have value, that value derives, in great part, from the human beings which each assembles and is not conferred or imposed by it on them. As a contribution to such better understanding let us recognise, in conclusion, that even persecution and even toleration is good. In proportion as this recognition extends more widely there will be less of the first and, consequently, less need for the second.

HUGH MEREDITH.

THE SHIVERING IN MY BONES

The shivering in my bones is for an island
that is now far from me,
not twisted in the distance but slender,
the whole warp and woof of it
one land out in the ocean.

But it is a pain that is in my bones
when I step on it again :
it is the hurt face of a man limbless
or a woman that has lost her child ;
it is as if the most precious manuscript
of the rarest poem
had been torn in two before my eyes.

And then to have known gladness
and to have been in the ecstasy of love
and seen all fair places between Pole and Equator,
to have learnt to work miracles and made many friends
was to have been—nothing at all,
with my country there lying broken from a landslip
and a great fault of a frontier running across its fields.

DAVID QUINN.

PROMISE

I came down from the hills.
I came down to the sea,
The grey sea combing from the rim of the grey sky ;
Remembering you, rose before the promise of roses.
I remember you and my blood is in the earth
Breaking the grey seals.

I walked by the sea.
I cannot remember now, only the heart beating
Only that I was like a dumb field furrowed into promise,
Red earth with the seed in its mouth.
Your mouth has spoken to me.
Like roses of rhododendrons breaking on dark leaves.
And I want the summer.

EDWARD SHEEHY.

FORESTRY AND THE GAELTACHT

THE failure of successive Governments to attempt the economic reconstruction of the Gaeltacht is the most profoundly disappointing feature of the first fourteen years of Irish self-government. When the Saorstát was established it might have been expected that the earliest efforts of constructive statesmanship would have been directed to rescuing the decaying remnants of that older and Irish-speaking Ireland from the poverty and depression from which they had suffered for centuries. It was hoped that those parts of the country which were still steeped in an immemorial tradition would not be allowed to continue the most economically backward, and that the Gaeltacht would have been given the economic foundations which would have redeemed much of it from being little better than a rural slum. Unfortunately for the Gaeltacht it forms part of a country where politics is an almost universal preoccupation, and economics is not considered important, and in dealing with its economic problems no breadth of vision has been shown, and no comprehensive plan adopted. The Irish-speaking districts which all our enthusiastic city Gaels have told us were essential for the survival of the Irish language and culture, have been put off like a poor relation with a few paltry doles, and while the Gaeltacht festers in its perennial poverty, and is saved from extinction by the inability of its inhabitants to leave it for ever, all our cultural energies are centred on superimposing Father O'Growney on the educational system of Archbishop Whately. It sounds like a parody on the aspirations and dreams and hopes of that high noon of the national revival which lasted through the first decade of the present century.

Following in the footsteps of the old British Congested Districts Board we have subsidised cottage industries, and kelp and carrageen, and added a variety of doles, but still we are only tinkering with the problem on a rather more generous scale, but in much the same way as the British Government

tinkered with it. It is a record of which this country has little reason to be proud.

What is needed is that the people of the western counties should be enabled to enjoy a good and an improving standard of life as the result of their own labours in the places where they live, and should not have to depend on migrating as casual labourers to another country, nor on drawing Unemployment Assistance to save them from destitution. Nothing less than this can be considered as a solution of their problem at all, and until this has been done one of the most urgent tasks of the Irish Government has been shirked.

In the days when Dublin Castle ruled, the Government experts never tired of telling us of all the things which could not be done in Ireland. Industries could be started from Jarrow to Japan, but never here. Forests could be planted from the Bay of Biscay to the north of Norway, but would not grow in Ireland. The reclamation of land could be undertaken from Holland to China, but for the central plain in Ireland to be waterlogged was part of the natural order, a thing not lightly to be interfered with. It might have been expected that the new Irish Government in the first vigour of its youth would have swept all that stale nonsense to one side, and availing of the resources of modern science, and following the example set in other countries, would have attacked problems like the Gaeltacht with the energy called for by the urgency of their plight.

In the first decade we had the Shannon Scheme, and then a pause of years. In the second we have a high tariff policy, which even if it accomplish all that its sponsors hope from it, will still leave the major problems of rural Ireland untouched. From Donegal to Kerry the Gaeltacht will still dwindle and die.

To make the barren lands in the West of Ireland as prosperous as any in Europe is not beyond our powers. It is entirely and completely practicable. To many people this will seem a fantastic statement. They can believe in all sorts of extraordinary developments in every country but their own. They

have heard that the French Government in the last century changed a desolate waste of shifting sands, which were exposed to the full force of westerly gales on the shores of the Bay of Biscay into one of the most valuable forests in the world, making depressed "congested districts" as poor as any part of the Gaeltacht, into one of the richest departments of France. They have read that Dutch engineers are draining and reclaiming the Zuider Zee, and will presently have increased the area of agricultural land in Holland by ten per cent. But the old tradition that such things can not happen in Ireland still flourishes, and still prevents the adoption of a boldly planned policy of rural reconstruction.

There is one way, and one way alone in which the Gaeltacht can be made prosperous. That way is to turn it into a great national Forest. Such poor agriculture as there is should be left until it is displaced by a more profitable employment, but all the land not used for tillage, and on which timber can be grown, should be planted with fast growing conifers for the supply of commercial timber. In this way alone can Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Kerry, and West Cork produce additional wealth sufficient to maintain their present and future population at a satisfactory economic level. About two million acres of land in these counties alone could be put to far more productive use than is the case at present. Some of it is used for rough grazing, and produces a few pounds of mutton or wool per acre per annum, and most of it does not produce anything at all. In the hands of capable foresters the greater part of it could be turned into valuable forest land.

The only essential raw material for modern industry which the poorer western lands will produce happens to be one of which Ireland is almost completely deficient, one which we will continue to need in ever increasing quantities and cannot do without, and which because we do not produce it here we must now import. That raw material is timber. In other countries land quite as poor as our neglected mountain ranges, and often

under far worse conditions of climate has been made to provide the raw material for a wide range of manufacturing industries.

Until the end of the middle ages Ireland was covered with forests. The whole country lies within that zone of Central Europe where the forest is the prevailing natural type of vegetation. Were it not for the destructive hand of man it would be forest still, and if in some catastrophe the human population disappeared, it would revert to forest again. The ruthless exploitation of the native timber which went on for centuries, and the wanton destruction of woods which gave shelter to "the Irish enemy," followed by the complete neglect of forestry on any national scale ever since, has left Ireland the most treeless country in Europe. The following table shows our unenviable plight :—

Country	Percentage of land area under Woods and Forests.			
Finland	73.4
Sweden	60.0
Austria	41.8
Russia	40.4
Czecho-Slovakia	34.3
Yugo-Slavia	31.2
Hungary	27.9
Bulgaria	27.0
Germany	26.2
Roumania	24.5
Norway	23.0
Switzerland	21.3
Poland	20.5
Estonia	19.6
France	17.8
Belgium	17.7
Spain	16.8
Italy	14.6
Greece	12.9
Denmark	9.0
Holland	7.9
Portugal	7.1
Great Britain	5.4
Saorstát Éireann	1.4

It is a matter of elementary prudence for any country that hopes to have an industrial future to ensure that the materials essential for its industries shall be available in sufficient quantities, and when large areas of land capable of providing one

of the most important of raw materials are left idle and practically useless, while the local population is also idle, or only partially employed, and requires to be maintained out of public funds, it is evident that the lack of a National Forest policy on a sufficient scale shows a lamentable absence of intelligent planning in the economic life of the country.

There is no material in the whole range of modern industry more essential than wood, and no other stable raw material is adaptable to such varied uses or appears in so many different forms. Apart from timber for building, and for woodworking industries, at least ninety per cent. of all the paper we use is made from wood pulp. Rayon, or artificial silk, either alone or mixed with other fibres, has within recent years sprung into the forefront of the textile industries. Wood is the raw material from which most of it is made. The uses to which cellulose derived from wood are being put are almost endless and are increasing daily.

These are things which no civilised community can do without and in Ireland we import timber, and the endless variety of products derived from wood to the value of over two and a half million pounds per annum, while the land and the labour which could provide most of the things we need both remain unused. The other countries of Europe, less naturally rich than we are, could not afford and would not tolerate the colossal waste which is allowed to continue here.

The trees which provide the raw material required in modern industry are not exotic or tropical varieties which cannot be grown in Ireland, but on the contrary they are hardy conifers which will not only grow here, but which in our mild climate can be brought to maturity for commercial purposes more quickly than in almost any other country from which our supplies are drawn. The annual increment of growth in Ireland exceeds that of the colder countries from which the bulk of our imports come.

There has been a long succession of Royal and Departmental

Commissions which have enquired into the subject of Forestry in Ireland. They have discussed every aspect of the question, and their reports lie in dozens of forgotten blue books. The British Government would not spend money on so vital and important a policy to rehabilitate rural Ireland, and the Irish Government has followed in their footsteps.

In their voluminous Reports these Commissions did not differ about one thing at least, and that was the entire suitability of our land and climate for the production of good commercial timber. To quote from but two of them :

In 1883 the Danish Forest Conservator D. Howitz was brought to Ireland to advise the Government of the day on the Re-afforesting of waste lands, and the application of forestry to the remedy of the destructive torrents and floods of the catchment basins of the rivers. His report was published in *Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons*, 1884 (39) LXII. 285. Writing from Copenhagen after his return on the 8th January, 1884, he said :

"Whereas in Ireland the hills and ranges once have been covered with great, and according to history, valuable woods, the traces of which are to be found everywhere in the bogs, and where it should be so easy to rear the most valuable timber trees, there the work of re-afforesting will not only be a boon to the country at large by preventing the flooding of the lowlands during heavy rains, and fertilising them by a steady flow of water throughout the year, making the climate more congenial and healthy, but it will have the great advantage of being a work eminently remunerative." (p. 2).

"Of the 20,000,000 acres of Ireland, about one quarter is well suited to forest cultivation, a percentage not at all too great. All the ranges of bogs, all the barren and desolate coast lands, and a great many of the very poor grass lands are natural forest, and should be made such." (p. 3).

"There are no great difficulties for cultivation in any part of Ireland, so far as I have been able to see, not even on the storm blown ranges on the west coast. The wind will there undoubtedly keep the forest down for a long while, and the outer belt will be of no great value for utilisation, but by and by the forest will gain the mastery, and if the protection of the outer belt is kept permanent and intact, inside this the now barren hills will in less than half a century become valuable forest, and through the protecting influence of these forests the meagre inland grass lands and poor fields will have become fertile rich meadows and highly productive cereal fields. The question of

re-afforestation must therefore to every experienced man, appear a matter of life and death to the country."

"The great river basins of the Shannon, Blackwater and Barrow, and a number of less significant basins would require perhaps a million acres to regulate the the flow of water. No engineering works will ever be able to prevent flooding. The real cause, the denudation of the slopes and ranges of the whole catchment basin must be stopped before any real good can be done as experience shows at the Rhone in France, and other rivers, where expensive engineering works have utterly failed in stemming the mountain torrents, or preventing them from flooding, the valleys and lowlands" (p. 4).

Had this work, here described as a matter of life and death to the country, been undertaken when the report was written, Ireland would have been spared the economic decay and depopulation which she experienced, and would be in a very different economic position to-day.

More than twenty years of neglect was to follow the Howitz Report before another Commission went over the same ground again. In 1907 the Department of Agriculture appointed its Committee on Irish Forestry. Again the experts arrived at the same conclusion. It is needless to quote more than a single sentence from their findings:—

"All the men of experience and expert knowledge are agreed that in soil and climate Ireland, for Forestry purposes, is particularly well favoured . . . On the question of her capacity to grow timber as well as any other country in Northern Europe there can be no doubt whatsoever."

Following the issue of this report the Department of Agriculture established a Forestry Branch in 1908. It was never given more than a small fraction of the money necessary for economic forestry, and between 1908 and 1934 it planted 38,314 acres. This is a pretty trifling contribution towards the couple of million acres which this country urgently needs, and even at last year's rate of planting, amounting to under 7,000 acres several centuries will elapse before extensive industries using wood will be able to rely on sufficient supplies of native timber to keep them going.

Unemployment Assistance and Home Assistance under the Poor Law are costing over £2,000,000 per annum, and this year

the Irish Government is going to spend £154,000 on Forestry. The recent successful efforts of the government of Sweden to deal with their unemployment problem suggest that if in Ireland we spent the £2,000,000 on Forestry, an expenditure of £154,000 would be ample for the relief of the poor. If we added to this the £300,000 we spend on administering the various doles, our treatment of the remnants of the unemployed might even be generous. Such a policy would have several advantages which we miss at present. At its lowest we would get very valuable national assets, the source of present advantage and future wealth instead of getting nothing, as we do now. We should be able to pay reasonable wages instead of the beggarly doles which are all we can now afford, and we would employ wage earners instead of maintaining a vast state organisation for the relief of paupers. The younger generation in Ireland would have some future to look forward to instead of so many of them being trapped, as they are, in a community which denies them the opportunity to earn a living in the land of their birth.

The Gaeltacht would no longer be the half derelict place that it is, and a new vigour would flow through Ireland, and a new hope come to wide districts now sunk in gloom.

Can this country afford any longer to waste millions of acres of land capable of growing profitable crops of timber, while our rural unemployed multiply the evidences of our incapacity to undertake the large schemes of reconstruction which the country so urgently needs? Is the decay of the Gaeltacht which began under the English administration to be continued and completed under an Irish one?

These are questions which we cannot continue to ignore without imperilling the whole future of Ireland.

BULMER HOBSON.

CHESTERTON: A TRIBUTE

Gilbert Keith Chesterton is dead, and it is fitting that in "Ireland To-day" tribute should be paid to the memory of a great and good Englishman who was among the staunchest of Ireland's friends, the stoutest champions of Ireland's cause. Of tribute (in death) in his own country he has had scant meed, and the reason is not far to seek; for Chesterton, in England, was a living and very live anachronism. He belonged to an earlier and a more spacious and catholic age, and the England of waning political power, of lost beliefs, and of a decadent culture, has not the measure of Chesterton's greatness.

For make no mistake about it, Chesterton was great: it would be the merest contradiction in terms to say of a man who loomed so large in the life and letters of his time that he was otherwise. George Bernard Shaw said of him that if he had been content to be a lesser force in journalism, he would have been a greater force in literature: Shaw might as well (and more wittily) have observed that if "G.K.C." had been content to be G.B.S., he would not have been G.K.C. ! The very point about Chesterton is that he was always and riotously Chesterton; that journalism (as he practised journalism) was the ideal outlet for his exuberant and inexhaustibly fertile mind; that the pace of literature as such was, for his swift purposes, too stilted-slow. Chesterton was a journalist by choice and method only, because he had so much to say, and, as mere mortal man, so little time in which to say it. And who shall aver that in throwing away his literary life he did not thereby, in the scriptural and most solemn sense, ensure it? In his time and prime, Chesterton, whether as critic, poet, essayist or mere commentator—his novels and his famous stories were neither novels nor stories in the accepted sense of character and plot—raised journalism to the power of literature. His best work—in the vast bulk of his output there was inevitably much that was poor—will or should survive: if it does not, then genius, unique

originality, sheer force of intellect throwing off provocative and right thought, have little, or at best a most uncertain meaning.

In one of his most perfect poems, Francis Thompson sang :

“ The angels keep their accustomed places

—Turn but a stone, and start a wing :

’Tis you, ’tis your estrangéd faces,

That miss the many-splendoured thing.”

and in those lines, we cannot help but think, is expressed the very secret of Chesterton’s greatness. A journalist Chesterton may have been, but in what he had to say there was nothing either frivolous or ephemeral. Mystic and poet as he was, his concern always, in a materialistic and a mechanistic age, was with the verities—with the Eternal Verity itself. Most literally and truly he never turned a stone but he started an angelic wing : and there is something, to the Irishman, queerly strange and yet queerly lovable and understandable, in this fleshly, jovial, great-hearted and simple-souled, brilliant Englishman who could and did, in season and out of season, without euphuism and in plain terms, speak of God—sing and ring and trumpet the only-splendoured thing which is God.

In the fullness of time, and in fulfilment of his own abundant nature and needs, Chesterton inevitably, gravitationally turned to the Catholic faith. Re-turned, he would himself have said, to what was in sober fact the faith of his English forebears. That going back, that setting back (which is a setting forward) of the clock, was the solution not only of his personal problem : it was the solution of their ills that he offered to an England, a Europe, a Western Civilisation which, for lack of the old common unifying faith, were disrupting and failing before his very eyes. It is not to be wondered at that Chesterton, in his death, has had so poor a Press. But is Chesterton dead, or his voice necessarily and for ever silent ?

PETER O’DONOVAN.

GRANDEUR

"WELL, as I said before, I say again,"—the old man crossed his legs and took a long pull at his pipe—"the only difference between one woman and another is how often and how hard should she be beat."

"Come ! Come !" I said. "You're very hard on women."

"I am not. I beat my own wife—God rest her—and she as good a woman as ever lived, and the only thing that's breaking my heart is that I didn't beat my daughter-in-law as well."

"At any rate, that wasn't what you were going to say."

"It wasn't, that's true, but reading about Jane Dwyer's death put it into my mind."

"Jane Dwyer?"

"Jane was the wife of a great friend of mine, one Philip Dwyer. Philip and myself were recruits together, we served in South Africa together, and after we got our discharge we worked on the railway together. He was a big, soft, crawling hulk of a man, and like most big men he had no proper venom in him. I knew he wasn't too happy with the woman he married—she was a Hourigan, one of the Hayfield Hourigans, as she said herself, that came down in the world; though what claim to grandeur they had, only the old Hayfield, no one ever knew. However, for the sake of the children he put up with her, and he might have done worse, for she kept a comfortable house even if it was a bit severe. He idolised the children and they idolised him. That was easy for them, because they never had anyone else to idolise; the mother saw to that. You'd see them going to Mass of a Sunday, five of them, all in a row, like little ladies and gentlemen with their prayer books and their pocket handkerchiefs. There were three girls and two boys. Ted was the eldest of the boys and Terry the youngest; the youngest of the girls was Ona, the second was Patricia and the third Tess.

"Well, Philip died suddenly. He was a powerful man, as I say, a great man for shifting loads, and one day he shifted one that was too much for him. Ted got a job in the goods' office. Whenever I was on the day shift Ted and myself would go down to work together; he'd give me a whistle on the way. He was a well-mannered, frightened sort of lad, never having knocked round with anyone of his own age, and for the sake of the smack I had for his father I looked after him in the store and saw that no one played tricks on him. Because in a family job a boy that wouldn't have someone to look after him would get a hard time.

"On account of that, Ted used to hang round me, getting me to tell him stories about his father and myself the time we were in Africa. Things went on like that for a while and then for a couple of days I noticed him a bit quiet in himself. At last he up and told me what it was—his old one that didn't like him being seen with me. "And I told her, Larry," says he, "the way you looked after me in the store, but all she said was, let me only tell herself if anyone said 'Boo' to me, and she'd come down straight and have the law on them."

"Well, I thought over it, and the more I did the less I liked it. It wasn't for myself at all, but for the family's sake. So one evening in with me to Jane. She was sitting by the fire with the three girls.

"Jane," I said, "is there any truth in what I hear—that you think we're not good enough for you?"

"Mr. Byrne," says she, very stiff, "those are not the words I used."

"No," said I, "but those are the feelings behind them, and I'd have you know, Jane," said I, "that the Byrnes are as good a family as the Hourigans any day of the year—even the Hayfield Hourigans—and as old and as well connected; and so far as history goes I never heard of a Hourigan that raised a hand in anger against anyone—looking after the Hayfield they were, I suppose."

"Mr. Byrne," says she, rising and drawing herself up, "if I want to study my history it isn't to you I'll come, thank you all the same. All I ask of you is to leave my children alone. I brought them up in my own way, and I want no stranger's hand on them."

"What more could I say? As you might imagine I was inclined to take her at her word, but I couldn't reconcile myself to paying Ted out for his mother's foolishness, and besides that there was something nice about him. Whenever he had an excuse he'd call into the house on his way home from work, and in the mornings instead of calling for me as he used he'd be waiting at the foot of the hill, no matter how late I was.

"Time passed, one year, two years, and one fine morning Ted was waiting for me in the usual place. I remember well it was a spring morning and there wasn't a soul out but the two of ourselves.

"Larry," says he, very solemn, "I'm thinking of running away."

"Have sense, boy," said I.

"But I must, Larry," said he. "If I don't I'll go mad. I

wanted to go for the railway clerkship but she wouldn't let me ; she didn't want me to be shifted, and now she's planning I'm to go into a provision shop the way she'll have me under her eye."

"Ted," said I, taking him by the arm, "I like you, but you mustn't expect me to advise you against your mother. If you take my advice, before you do anything go and talk to the Agent. He knew your father and he'll put you on the right road."

"And so he did. Ted got a transfer, and one fine morning off with him to Dublin without a word or a sign to his mother. One of the other lads came up at dinner time with a note for her. That was the first she heard of it. She had a picture of the boy on the mantelpiece. She took it out of the frame, and under the very eyes of the two elder girls she put it in the fire. They didn't dare to open their mouths. They knew where Ted was gone, and she knew they knew, but she wouldn't give them the satisfaction of mentioning his name. From that day to this she never mentioned it.

"When Ted wrote she returned his letters without opening them. Then he wrote to Tess and Patricia, but she intercepted the letters and burned them. After that he always wrote to them in care of me, and on their way back from devotions the three girls would slip into my house. Whenever there was a letter they read and burned it then and there, and if there happened to be money in it, Patricia hid it inside her clothes.

"Patricia was a real wild one, even when she was only a slip of a girl. She had no steadiness in her ; one time she'd be crying and the next she'd be laughing. She used that money under her mother's nose, pretending she was buying stockings that cost one and eleven and buying something that cost three or four times the price. The money did them no good, only all the harm it did Patricia, making her more extravagant than she was by nature, and all the time she thought she was very clever in deceiving her mother.

"Patricia was a monitress in the nuns' school and she was supposed to be going for a teacher, but wasn't she coming home from school every day with an Englishman. Someone told the priest and the priest told Tess. When they made enquiries it turned out that the Englishman was married and that Patricia knew it. When Tess challenged her she brazened it out, saying that she couldn't go with any boy from the town for fear her mother would find out and disgrace him—it was true, she would—and that there was nothing in walking with the Englishman because he was going back home. Tess took her word for it,

and went with her to say good-bye to him. They met him out the road. He had a car waiting and his bags in it. They talked for a few minutes, and Tess shook hands with him. And then that brazen faggot, Patricia, held out her hand to Tess. Tess was too stunned to say anything, and the car drove off and left her there by the roadside.

"That was a queer household. It was just as if there was a blight on it. The three that were left went in and out without a smile or a word, and they all looked ten years older than they were. The money was running short and Tess went to work in a bakery while Terry got a job in a shop in town.

"There were two people now writing letters to our house and their names were never mentioned in their own. Tess and little Ona would come in, and Tess would read out the letter and burn it. She was looking bad. I knew Terry was a load on her mind. He was a queer boy, fat and solemn like a priest, but without a stitch of sense. He was by way of being an artist. He had gab enough for a whole corporation, and loved doing the old man, putting his sisters in their places. He pretended to be very shocked at Patricia's elopement, and didn't want to hear anything about her. The priest had a long talk with him, advising him to stop at home, and told Tess she had nothing at all to fear. "He'll never run away," said he. "He has too much old blather."

"But blather or no blather, he ran away all right. One night he crossed to England and joined the army. By this time I knew Tess was in consumption. She used to look at Ona with a sad smile and say: "Ona will be the last." And little Ona—she was only turned sixteen—used to get very upset. "I won't leave you, Tess," she'd say. She went to work in the post office. The second of the Miss Finucanes was failing and the sister wanted someone to take her place.

"She wasn't there long when she got great with a young fellow called Costello. Ona was a plucky little piece and thought she could do what the others were all afraid to do. In spite of Tess's warnings, she went to her mother and told her she was keeping company, but she had no intention of getting married as long as she was wanted at home. All she asked was to bring young Costello in, as any girl would be allowed to do.

"That was Ona down to the ground. She was the honestest soul that ever stood in two shoes, without a scrap of cunning or deceit in her.

"She paid for her honesty. Her mother nearly went mad. Down with her straight to the post office to ask the Miss

Finucanes what they meant to let such a thing go on under their eyes, and from that she went on to the Costello's. The Costellos were as decent a family as ever breathed, but Jane Dwyer stood outside their door, and read and spelt them up and down till they were ashamed to show their faces.

"Tess tried to talk reasonably to the crazy woman but she wouldn't listen. She said she'd take Ona from the post office and lock her up and go out to work herself sooner than see her married to any Costello. Tess saw there was only one thing for it, and that the only peace they would ever see was when the last of the flock was gone. It was a hard choice, but she went to Costello and begged him whatever little money he had, to marry the girl then and there. He was easy enough to persuade, though he had no money and no prospects. But Ona was proud. She didn't want to give in and in the end she agreed at all only because she knew that nothing else would ease her sister's mind.

"One morning she went out to work as usual and got married. As luck would have it, someone was in the chapel and saw them, and before midday her mother had the news. That evening when Ona and Costello were walking on the promenade at Cashleen he saw her mother before them, going slowly along and watching everyone that passed. He pulled Ona away down a side street, went back to the hotel for their bags, called a car and left the town without telling a soul where they were bound for.

"Jane came back. She said nothing to Tess. But Tess wasn't able to hold out any longer. She was dying and knew it. She threw up her work. There was no proper reason she should work. She had money enough. She begged her mother to make use of what the others were sending. But no. Jane wouldn't touch it. If she saw anything about the house that wasn't bought with her own money she threw it in the ash-bucket or on the range. Month after month she trapsed down to the pawn till there was hardly a thing left. Then she went out to work herself as a charwoman. Tess came to see us oftener than ever. Sometimes she sat by the fire and cried from weakness and shame.

"I knew she wanted to see them all again before she died but she wouldn't because of what might happen; she held out to the last, pretending she was getting well. When she did die, there was no one with her. That night I wired to Ted.

"They all came to my house the next day. It was as quiet

a crowd as ever I saw gathered in one house. There was Terry—he was a sergeant by this time, Patricia and her Englishman, Ona and Costello and Ted. After we had a bit to eat I put on my best coat and went down the road before them. Jane was sitting in the sick room, beside the corpse. She was a withered old woman, her shoulders were bent and the skin of her face was as waxy as the dead girl's. She frightened me to see her sitting there so still.

"Well, Jane," I said, "you know who you have?"

She rose up at me and if ever there was murder in a woman's eyes it was in hers.

"You devil!" says she, in a cracked little voice, as though she was after talking all day and all night. "Couldn't you leave me in peace even with my dead child?"

"Come, come, Jane," says I. "I'm sorry for your trouble but you've other children to think of as well."

"I have no child but the one," says she, "and the Almighty God took her."

"Her brothers and sisters will want to see her now," said I.

"She have no brothers or sisters, I tell you!" she bawled.

"Maybe she haven't," says I, getting a little bit heated, "but there's people remarkably like them coming down the road at this minute."

"Not one of them will put a foot inside this door!"

"Oh, begod, that's where you're making a serious mistake," says I.

"I tell you they'll come into this room only over my dead body."

"Ah, have sense, you fool of hell!" said I, losing my temper properly. "You know as well as I do that you can't stop them. They have the law and the people behind them, and if they raised their little fingers there's a hundred men—ay, begod, and a hundred women—would burst the house in around you. No, 'tisn't that, but you're so bitter that your own spite against them is more to you than the respect you should have for your dead child."

"Mad as she was, she saw the sense of that."

"Very well, then," says she, drawing her shawl about her. "Bring them in, and then be gone, and my curse on them and the curse of the Almighty God on them, every one, and that they might never know the grace of a happy death as they'll never know the grace of a mother's blessing."

"Curses come back," said I.

"And my curse on you, Larry Byrne," says she, kneeling

before me, "for 'twas you encouraged them. Only for you the first whelp wouldn't have gone, and only for you the second would never have had the money to spend on finery and her soul's damnation. My curse on you, Larry Byrne, and if misfortune came on me, may it come on you a thousand times, and on your children, and your children's children."

"Curse away, you black witch," says I, pretending not to be afraid, though God knows, there was no great spirit in me.

"Bring them in," she bawled, standing up and waving her hands with the claws out, ready to tear me, "bring them all in, Phil Dwyer's gets and the prostitute along with them!"

"The devil choke you," said I, "what way is that to call your daughter?"

"What else is she but a prostitute?" says she. "A street-walker, an arrant drab!"

"She'll be a shining angel before the throne of God when you're damned and howling," said I and I turned on my heel and went out.

"The others were waiting for me. We left the Englishman and Costello chatting by the fire. It was dark, but there was a crowd around the gate. They melted away before us and we went in.

"There was no one inside now but a neighbour woman, minding the corpse. I whispered to Ted to be quick about it and get out before herself would change her mind and say vespers for us. I couldn't help but feel for him and the others. There was the little house they were brought up in, and all the changes that were on it already. The paper was peeling from the walls, and the clock and the channies, the pictures and the furniture were all swept away. The same crowd was gathered around the gate again but no sign of Jane. I often thought since what the soul of that woman must have been like.

They only stayed a few minutes and I went out before them to hoosh off the crowd. They were all crying but Patricia, and she looked like a devil. There was something of her mother in Patricia, and I swear if Jane crossed her path at that minute there would have been blood spilt. But there was no sign of Jane, and no sign of her the day of the funeral. They buried Tess without laying eyes on her. After that they scattered again to the four winds of the world.

"Naturally, we were all wondering what would happen to Jane. One evening about a year ago the daughter-in-law rushed in with the news that there was a carriage and pair outside Dwyer's. I put on my hat and strolled down to the corner to

see what was happening. There was a carriage all right, and a crowd all along the footpath. Then the door opened and Jane came out. Man, dear, such a sight was never seen ! She had on a queer, flouncy, old-fashioned dress the colour of violets and a hat like a hearse. And yet, whatever came over the crowd, not one of them laughed. She had a travelling bag as well, and when she got outside the door she dropped it and turned the key in the lock. Then she called a little boy and gave him the key wrapped up in a bit of paper, took her bag and herself into the carriage and off she drove. And where do you think she was going to ? ”

“ How would I know ? ” I asked.

“ She was going to the Workhouse. What they thought of her there I don’t know, but whether it was the style she arrived in that made them suspicious or not, within a month they had her up in the asylum, and within twelve months she was dead.”

“ And her children ? ” I asked.

The old man shook his head.

“ Not one ? ”

“ Not one ”

FRANK O’CONNOR.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

THE ARCHITECTURE OF BELFAST

BELFAST grew too slowly in the eighteenth century and too quickly in the nineteenth to have much chance of proper architectural development. Its main expansion till the end of the late war had been on nineteenth-century lines and the chief faults of the city are those it shares with most of the commercial cities of its day, though it is distinguished by being less confined and more liberal of space for public and private use than most. Here and there still linger spots with an earlier flavour, Sir John Soane's Academical Institution, College Squares North and East, the neighbourhood of Clifton Street, and of May Street and Chichester Street and some terraces near the University, though the local doctors have vulgarised University Square with bay windows and plate glass.

College Square North, shows best what Belfast had tried to be, and Belfast has obscured it with the pretentious and ugly pile of the Technical College. There may be some compensation for this in the fact that its presence there draws to the neighbourhood its thousands of pupils. How many of them pause to look at the decent little hotel opposite its doors, which so quietly rebukes its neighbours? A wider public in the too frequent intervals of boredom at the Ravenhill Rugby Ground may have found themselves studying the admirably placed Presbyterian Church in the Classic style on the Castlereagh Hills, which dates from a century ago.

These places might go unobserved in Dublin, but in Belfast they are precious. They are the afterglow of the eighteenth century, whose poorest work has qualities the nineteenth knows nothing of. The most important contribution of the first half of the nineteenth century is the Queen's College of Sir Charles Lanyon, an Englishman who practised in Belfast. It is easy for this age of functionalism to make fun of its Tudor adornments, but let the observant look closely at its proportions and its texture and ask themselves how many other efforts of its kind in the British Isles are half as satisfying. Queen's is the most successful brick building in Belfast for over eighty years. Except for schools and churches brick was no longer considered a fit medium for public buildings, and none of the later nineteenth century schools and few of the churches have much merit. This is partly due to the general collapse in design and partly to the kind of brick that came into general use and of which Belfast

is mainly built. It is hard, shiney and immutable. Much though the builders loved it, nature will have none of it, for she will deposit nothing on it to mellow its aggressiveness ; even dirt scorns it. It was considered highly respectable, and few decent citizens would have felt proud of a house whose bricks did not look as if they had been polished by a machine.

The later portions of the nineteenth century are distinguished by several important works designed by the ablest of native architects, W. H. Lynn, among them the later buildings of the Queen's College and the Methodist Church in Carlisle Circus. But the work by which Lynn is known as an important architect to the present generation of Belfastmen is the warehouse of Richardson, Sons and Owden, the Florentine sandstone building that faces the City Hall. It would be flattering the perception of the Northern Athenians to pretend that they would ever have discovered its merits for themselves. Like so many widely-held opinions in Belfast it owes its currency to the fact that somebody important came from outside and told them about it. A photograph of the building and Oscar Wilde's enthusiastic account of it are duly exhibited in the Museum.

It is Belfast's greatest architectural tragedy that the development of the rest of Donegall Square was not in Lynn's hands. A series of elaborate and conflicting buildings was erected about which the excuse cannot even be made that they all owe their existence to different designers. The square might easily have been made a magnificent thing (what an opportunity for a proper civic centre !), but the blight laid upon it then continues still. It would be difficult to say what would have been the appropriate solution of the problem presented by the vacant site on the East side, but it is hard to believe that it could have been dealt with less satisfactorily than by the recently erected mass of cream faience.

Of the City Hall, by Sir Brumwell Thomas, that now stands in the middle of the Square, it is difficult to speak with finality. It is generally admired, and from any point of view there is much to admire ; its dome especially is successful, and to be appreciated fully should be viewed from close at hand looking up from the interior courtyard, and from a distance in the Ormeau Park, especially when it is flood-lighted. Those of us who feel that the style is not right for the centre of Belfast must console ourselves with the reflection that no other city at the time would have been likely to do better and few got a building so good in its kind. Furthermore, Belfast had no distinctive atmosphere that imposed a style. Herein it differs

from Londonderry, whose grey walls cry out against that sandstone intruder, the Guildhall; but there is a queer justice in this, for this building was the gift of the Honourable the Irish Society, the London Company whose patronage corrupts the soul of Derry.

By the beginning of the war the centre of Belfast was static, and its missed opportunities were obvious in its three great central streets. The Bank of Ireland in Donegall Place stands alone in possessing qualities that would fit it for any main thoroughfare; but nobody has told Belfast about it, so nobody looks at it. The expansion of the city was adequate to meet its needs and a peculiar circumstance militated against development. The antiquated system of valuation under which older buildings were assessed left much property of great value rated so advantageously by comparison with newer buildings that it would not have paid to replace or modernise it. The slightest alteration brought a visit from the valuers with disastrous consequences to the pockets of its owners. This impediment was only removed with the general revaluation of the Six Counties last year, and already the effects are being seen in the centre of the city.

One cannot pass from pre-war conditions without drawing attention (probably for the first time in print) to two remarkable creations, a knowledge of which is indispensable to an understanding of the soul of Belfast. The first is the Ballynafeigh Methodist Church on the Ormeau Road. The frontispiece of any history of Belfast Architecture should assuredly be devoted to this building. It has never been explained; its Muscovite appearance is unrelated to anything I know of the history of Wesleyanism. Truly an exotic bloom and Belfast's most desperate effort in the cause of Art. (The curious would be well advised to go some few hundreds of yards further along the road and compare with it the peculiar little Moorish war memorial in front of the Presbyterian Church). More interesting still, and more important for an understanding of Belfast's ambitions, is Maryville Street. The reader need not ask his Belfast friends where this is, for they will not know. I was brought to it by an Englishman who knew and loved it first. It is a street of small dwelling houses, built in the common brick, but with its windows and its doors picked out in yellow brick or white glaze. Let the artist walk down it, looking alike to this side and to that, and compare it with streets in Bath and terraces in Brighton, and think; and let the philanthropist walk down it and thank God for the good heart of the builder

who lavished his money to adorn the houses of the humble.

Since the war many things have happened to alter the appearance of Belfast. The housing shortage was acute and the activities of the speculator have been unremitting. Unfortunately such control of these activities as there has been is limited to the attention of the sanitary inspector and the traffic cop. Estates are bought up and developed with the sole desire of making money, not from house rents or the sale of houses, which are disposed of very cheaply, but from inflated ground rents ; freehold houses are not to be had. Proper architectural supervision seems to be unknown and villas of mass-produced individuality are lumped together without a thought of general effect. Post-war affluence and the revolt from industrial conditions are probably responsible for the disappearance of the terrace, and there is a significant revolt from the older type of brick to more pleasing matt surfaces.

The countryside, too, is spoiled by wretched little subsidy houses, the Government grants for which proved easy money for the enterprising. Some parts of the famous Antrim Coast Road have now definitely ceased to be beauty spots through the disastrous action of builders who wished to exploit its attractions. In Ireland the one sacred right is that of the mean man to make mean money in a mean way, and as long as he does so it is nobody's concern how he ruins the landscape. I refuse to flatter my readers in the South by pretending that this is a peculiarly Northern trait ; the same thing happens in the South and Ulster has nothing more shocking to show than the concrete and asbestos abortions that have arisen to disfigure the face of Connemara.

The establishment of the Northern Ireland Government led to the building of the Parliament House at Stormont and of the Courts of Justice on the Markets site. These buildings were the gift of the English Government and the work of English architects. Of Stormont (speaking purely from an artistic point of view) it can be said that it looks best from a distance ; its imposing mass and simple shape are well suited to its commanding site. From close at hand one has the feeling that it should not be where it is ; it shows no signs as yet of growing to its surroundings and gives the impression of being sited in a desert. The Courts of Justice, on the other hand, fit nicely into their urban surroundings and look solid and dignified. Another English gift is the tall, modernistic Telephone Exchange nearby ; it is severely functional, but, in the opinion of the writer, fails of its full effect through an excessive restraint in colour and

texture contrasts. The attitude of the Belfastman to these imported contributions is one of mistrustful admiration; they were very costly to build, and what is more to the point, they are not cheap to keep up and he has to foot the bill for that. He likes the look of Stormont, but is fond of calculating the wages of the charwomen required to keep it clean.

Of more significance is the post-war evidence of a growing interest in architecture among public bodies. Competitions have been established in quarters where they would not have been thought of before. In 1930 a competition confined to Irish architects was held for a Masonic Hall at Enniskillen and won by Messrs. J. McGeagh and B. Cowser of Belfast. In 1933 the town of Portstewart held a competition, open to Northern architects, for a Town Hall. The restraint of Mr. Cowser's building may have disappointed local sentiment, which expected in a Town Hall a few towers with perhaps a dome or two thrown in, but the obvious value the town has got for its money in the way of accommodation has won for the building a considerable popularity. In 1934 the Tuberculosis Committee of the Belfast Corporation held a similarly confined competition for an extension to their hospital at Whiteabbey, to cost £120,000. This competition raises a nice question in the layman's mind. The winning design of Messrs. R. H. Gibson and J. McGeagh has been severely modified and the buildings actually to be erected are to cost £180,000. Were the conditions of the competition so drawn up as to justify this change? What must the feelings of the unsuccessful architects be who gave their time and energies to the competition when they find that the money to be spent is so greatly in excess of what they were asked to work to? At the same time as this there was another competition, open to all Irish architects, for a new Assembly Hall for the Methodist College. This was won by Mr. A. H. Hope, of Dublin, with a design which, though somewhat disappointing in its elevation, is agreed to be a model of skilful planning. It would have been interesting to see what would have been the result had the full force of rivalry from Belfast architects been directed to this competition; the leading men are understood to have confined themselves to the larger Whiteabbey job, which was open at the same time.

Space may not allow of more than a reference to some of the excellent schools that have been built by the Education Committee's architect, Mr. R. H. Wilshire. They are, most of them, situated in sites that do not allow of their making any great change in the general appearance of the city, but the

Donegall Pass facade of the school in course of erection there promises to be the most successful street frontage in brick in Belfast. Of the large number of Picture Houses that have been erected, it may be said that they have learned the modern habit of being economical without being objectionable. Those for which Mr. J. McB. Neill is responsible are easily discernible, and the huge theatre of his design being built at Bangor already looks most imposing. Of ecclesiastical architecture I have said nothing ; I know it chiefly from the outside. The most important work has been the development of the unfinished Protestant Cathedral and the striking sculpture of Mr. Morris Harding that decorates it.

In contrast with the successes and the forethought of some is the laxity of control over the choice of architects by public bodies. If you ask what constitutes an architect in Ulster, the answer is a brass plate and a brass neck. The names (and especially the degrees) of some of those responsible for public work make interesting reading. The press, as a whole, is uninterested ; one honourable exception is the "Belfast Newsletter," which keeps the public well informed of building activity, but has not so much interest in the artistic side. This communication will have achieved its purpose if it convinces those who are inclined to dismiss the claims of Northern Ireland too lightly : that there is something to see and still more to be done.

MAN FROM THE NORTH.

ART

THE HAVERTY TRUST

SINCE the foundation of the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art in Dublin nothing ruffled the calm current of aesthetics so much as the publication of the news of the Haverty Bequest. The late Mr. Haverty had never posed as a patron of art or artists and his munificence came as a bombshell. It is significant that the first reaction of certain newspapers to the story was a suspicion that the Testator was an "eccentric" and some rather ungrateful not to say ungrateful—and purely apocryphal—legends were in circulation describing him as a recluse and hinting at a parallel between him and the ubiquitous old maid with her family of cats. Mingled with the genuine amazement that anyone in his sober senses could have been guilty of such altruism there was noticeable a faint but highly diverting resentment the origins of which were so subtle that it would be courting contradiction to expose them.

Generally, the immensity of the occasion was not recognised. Benefactions of the kind are not only rare in Ireland, they are almost unknown, for the simple reason that most of the wealth has been concentrated in the hands of two classes of which one has not yet heard about Art and the other refuses to believe in the Irish Nation, and the pretensions of the major possessing class to be leaders in culture has rarely betrayed them into any financial commitments. The late Mr. Haverty, however, came of a family strong in both national and artistic traditions and he nobly fulfilled them.

No proper tribute has yet been paid to this extraordinary patriot, whose modesty was such that he ignored even the posthumous publicity, which is a usual condition of such bequests. It would be a highly commendable act of the Trustees to find some method, within the terms of the will, whereby the donor, as a man and not merely as a bank-account, could be kept permanently before the nation and the artists who will benefit by his generosity.

The terms of the legacy are naturally of great interest. It is provided that the works of living Irish painters are to be purchased and exhibited in recognised exhibitions, but no cognisance was taken by Mr. Haverty of the artificial division of the country, and it has been necessary for the courts, in order to carry out the obvious wishes of the Testator, to provide that Ulster will benefit in due proportion. This has very properly been done. With regard to the type of painting which Mr. Haverty desired to encourage the will is explicit, and historical or imaginative subjects, "with an occasional landscape of a very high order," are specified. Now, the Trustees have not yet purchased an historical picture, for the reason that no historical work, in the accepted sense, has come under their notice. The will is so definite in this respect, however, that it would seem as if the Trustees would be practically bound to acquire any historical painting which reached a reasonable standard. Come all ye Irish artists and listen to my song. In the absence of such works and in view of the less strict interpretation which the other conditions involve, the Trustees

have accepted pictures of contemporary life and are evidently prepared to argue that if not historical now they will be, some time.

It is hard to realise what all this means to Irish artists. It means literally the annual expenditure of a sum of money probably larger than has ever been spent in a single year by private patrons on the works of living Irish craftsmen, exclusive of portraits. The will wisely provides further that should the capital sum ever fall below ten thousand pounds the purchase of pictures is to be suspended until dividends from trust funds bring it up to that figure again. The capital sum is, however, so far in excess of that amount that only extraordinary fluctuations would so affect it.

The destination of the pictures acquired, as laid down by the terms of the Bequest, is any Municipal Gallery or recognised public collection, and it is believed that the Trustees intend to approach the courts for a liberal interpretation of this condition, so that greater effect may be given to the Testator's wishes. It appears that at present only the Municipal Collections of Cork, Belfast and Dublin would benefit—the National Gallery being, more or less, debarred by its own precedents—and since these cities are comparatively well served it is felt that some means should be found of grasping the opportunity offered to decentralise art and carry it to other communities less fortunately dowered. There does not seem to be anything in the terms of the Bequest to prevent the Trustees from holding in different towns loan exhibitions of pictures purchased by the fund. The only difficulty would be to find Town Councils eager, or even willing, to co-operate. But quite apart from such temporary exhibitions it would seem as if any Urban or County Council, by inaugurating any kind of permanent collection in any kind of quarters would be entitled to claim a share of the pictures, and it is sad to think that so far the possibility has not been explored. Some time ago the Trustees held an exhibition of a number of fine paintings acquired through the Bequest, the nucleus of a gallery of which any city might have been proud, and a deaf man could have heard the words: "What offers?" in the air. But there was no response, and the pictures have since been split up between the "recognised collections."

A rather peculiar situation will eventually result if some method of decentralising art is not devised. The Dublin Municipal Gallery, for instance, will, in the course of time, be snowed under by the works of Irish painters. This is not to deprecate such works, but the particular value of that collection is that it affords, or rather once afforded, an opportunity to the public and, above all, to Irish artists to see the work of their contemporaries in other countries. Without such contacts art will stagnate, and one has only to recall the tremendous influence on local art exercised by the Gallery, when it was a modern gallery, to realise the importance of renewing such contacts. By the generosity of the Haverty Trust the Municipal Gallery will be able to evade its responsibilities in this respect for the future as it has done in the past, and

(Continued on page 61)

MUSIC

MUSICAL CRITICISM IN IRELAND

Now that we are passing through the region of the doldrums, as far as musical activity is concerned, it might be as well to examine the position of musical criticism in Ireland, with special reference to Irish musical life.

A well-informed, intelligent critical activity is, I think, essential to the artistic well-being of a community—or, if not essential, is at least most desirable. But the proviso must be added, I think, that such criticism must follow in the steps of performance—that fundamental critical values must be derived from performance; that it is the duty of criticism to assess the value of performance rather than to lay down rules for its future. For there is no rule that can be laid down by criticism that may not be broken with impunity by genius, which formulates and follows its own code of values. To be of any worth, criticism must be an assessment of realized values, and where it stalks ahead of performance, it is unwarranted and, I fear, more, inimical than helpful to growing cultural activity.

This is the case in Ireland—that musical criticism holds its head so high, is so far advanced beyond the standard of performance, that, to be true to its own code of values it must damn with faint praise very many worthy cultural efforts. For what critic, with his standard set by Toscanini's New York Philharmonic Orchestra, could listen with pleasure to our usual orchestral performances here? To be true to his own high standard he must condemn, or if he appreciates the work being done, in terms of desirable cultural activity and wishes to help, he can only write down some meaningless exhortations to perseverance, with some vague references to ultimate success; which exhortations are usually the reverse of inspiring when read by the performers. And this is the musical critic's dilemma here in Ireland that being true to his own high standard he must be hurtful.

But, I think, it is in the realm of new creative work that the advanced critic is most hurtful. For it is a peculiar thing about the art of music making, that the creative musician is always in competition with the giants of his race; this is not so in any other art. A dramatist having written a modern play does not find his critic examining the work from, shall we say, a Shakespearean standard of values. If his play be a psychological study of a man, he will not find the critic cavilling because, compared to Hamlet, the dialogue is lacking in Shakespeare's poetic fluidity; nor, will the dimensions he employs be assessed as trivial because they do not approximate to Shakespeare's. In all the arts but music there seem to be certain sub-divisions in the standards of critical values and works are judged from standards that have a definite relation to the set of values implied in the works.

But in all musical criticism such sub-divisions seem, more or less, to be lacking. A case in point might be the relative positions of Wagner and Verdi in most critical assessments. Wagner is deified and Verdi is treated as an artist

of much less importance, until, coming under Wagner's influence, he wrote *Othello* and *Falstaff*. These works being successful adventures in Wagnerian realms advance Verdi's status in the estimation of the critics. In other words, the standard of these critics is a Wagnerian standard, and Verdi, adjudged by this is, naturally, less a Wagnerian than Wagner; ergo, he is not as great. If a critic were to write slightly of Correggio, because he was unlike Van Dyck, he would be reckoned a foolish critic indeed: but due to some strange fixity of standard this is what happens in much musical criticism. The root cause of this fixity is very difficult to determine.

Such is the unsatisfactory state of musical criticism in the cosmopolitan world, where such criticism has its roots in realized performance and is to that extent legitimate. Herculean efforts are being made, particularly in Germany, to find a fundamental, a musical aesthetic that will place musical criticism upon a sounder basis than its present unhappy position. Here in Ireland, musical criticism, with standards that have no relation to the quality of performance around it, is much more unsatisfactory; and particularly so, in assessing the value of new creative work.

The neophyte in Ireland commencing to write, treading a lonely path, unable to draw sustenance from a long musical development expressing the soul of his people, finds his immature work judged by standards that have their roots in the final achievements of the great masters. His part writing must, in purity, approximate to the best Mendelsohn, and he must write with a Mozartean limpidity to fill a form as perfect and complex as Beethoven's. These are, more or less, the qualities sought by the critic, and he may not be blamed because he holds such high standards. But the trouble is that the application of such standards to new creative work in Ireland has a corrosive rather than a corrective result. And so there has grown up in Ireland an idea that the writing of music is a matter of surpassing difficulty—a matter of such difficulty that music-making is somewhat shunned. Such an idea is incorrect. The few grammatical rules governing correct composition are just as easily learnt as the rules governing correct speech; and these rules are all that can be taught. All the other qualities that make good music are matters for the soul of the individual writer and can be learnt only by experience: their reduction to a teachable formula is impossible. While the neophyte is learning by his experiences he may suddenly find a critic judging his work by standards derived from a much more advanced cycle of music-making; damned with faint praise, he may not be blamed if he essays something that seems more possible of achievement than the writing of good music—music with qualities that will approximate to the standards set by the critics. Musical composition is almost dead in Ireland and musical criticism must shoulder its share of responsibility for such an unhappy state of things: for where it should have been beneficial it has been harmful.

And this is the unfortunate impasse in musical Ireland to-day, that creative work and criticism—even when criticism attempts to be kind—are enemies

with little hope of reconciliation : for there is no goad so wounding to the creative artist as kindly, critical patronage, and criticism, advanced beyond performance, if it desire to be helpful, must needs be kind. One day a reconciliation may come ; and such reconciliation will be the sure sign of a healthy musical culture. But such culture will not arrive until the day when criticism will follow docilely in the wake of performance, in the steps of creative artists who, ultimately, dictate the fundamental values of all criticism.

EAMONN Ó GALLCOBHAIIR.

ART—*continued from page 58*

from cellars to attics Charlemont House will be loaded with canvases by the dozen Irish painters who alone reach the necessary standard. This will be all the more noticeable because the Haverty Trust will afford a market for out-size canvases, in fact, there is already a tendency to produce pictures of an area hitherto unsaleable and this is not altogether due to artistic exuberance but is also (perish the thought !) traceable to a simple mathematical calculation. The criterion implied should be promptly and firmly discouraged by the Trustees and if the tendency is not checked two or three pictures bought by the fund will soon be enough to cover the walls of the average room in any public building.

Everything about the Haverty Trust is good news ; but the greatest hope for the future of Irish art lies in the possibility afforded of enriching the life of our provincial cities and towns. Limerick, for instance, a city hoary with history, and now the centre of considerable industrial activity, has suitable accommodation to hand, well situated and at present partly used to house an accumulation of objects supposed to justify the title of museum, but which (if memory serves) consists chiefly of a cannon-ball discharged by King William's army against the walls in 1691. But Limerick needs no prompting from IRELAND TO-DAY. As we go to press news is published of the proposal to establish a gallery there. She is first in the field, and her enterprise may necessitate a revision of the despairing adage : " Limerick was, Dublin is, and Cork will be." Mr. Dermot O'Brien has interested himself, and his promise of co-operation is significant since, besides being President of the Academy, he is on the Board of the National Gallery and Chairman of the Haverty Trust. There are many other towns which with a little effort might also take advantage of the situation. At present they slumber, but, no doubt, in time, awakened by Limerick's example, they will help to justify the generosity and vision of the Founder of the Haverty Trust.

JOHN DOWLING.

THEATRE

GOOD SPIRITS AND HIGH SPIRITS

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL was notable for one thing among many—the introduction of comedy into a religious play. In some ways this was too consciously done, yet one was glad of it, for otherwise this play would have been too oppressive to be of value, its sheer intensity would have numbed instead of invigorating one. It is this refusal to unbend, this deadly preoccupation with serious things only, coupled as a rule, with sentimental attitudes of thought on the part of author and players which have so often killed religious drama in this country.

As a result of this, the average audience has become prejudiced against such plays, so that those of real merit do not get the support they deserve. Still this show was quite well supported, as it deserved to be. Such a play as this had also to overcome the prevailing dullness of appreciation which only accepts the conventional, the ordinary. Why will people refuse to let themselves go, to give their God-given senses full play, to see, to hear, to feel spontaneously and fully? Why not cultivate a childlike outlook, lose oneself in colour, rhythmic movement, lovely verse-speaking or in the sequence of ideas being presented? Our education has much to answer for here, as also has our social environment, our heritage of nineteenth-century puritanism and half-hypocrisy. We, in this Catholic country, suffer to go unchallenged that divorce between Art and Religion which both Renaissance and Reformation introduced. A childlike zest and serenity are needed for art-appreciation, and this is implicit in the words: "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

What I have said of appreciation goes also for creation. Play production should be approached in this spirit of simplicity, of direct approach, and religious plays especially should not be handled with heavy solemnity, with that Sabbatarian gloom reminiscent of slitwindowed meetinghouses on wet Sundays.

Now here this production almost failed, and, as a result, in spite of light relief, the prevailing impression was one of oppressiveness. Although only two hours long, it was, as a friend remarked, "a night's work to get it properly." There were, I think, three causes of this—the text, the chorus, and the décor.

The text was weak in attempting to pack too much into each line—it was more a play of the study than of the theatre. Indeed, it is only on reading it that one sees fully the real nobility of thought and statement, the flexibility of line, the constantly changing melody and rhythm, all in versification based on modern English speech-rhythm and intonation. "Sweeney Agonistes" and "The Wasteland" have shown what the author can do on these lines and here, especially in some speeches for the chorus, we get again the wonderful mood-creation, the atmospheric implications, of his earlier work. There are many fine speeches, but two especially remain in the memory—the first speech of the First Tempter and the last speech spoken by the Third Priest. There is always real characterisation as between speaker and speaker in the lines

themselves, and another merit of the dramatist is his gift for climax in the speeches as well as his use of refrains and recurrent lines. The Sermon, again, is exquisite prose—serene and simple, movingly sincere. The author's stage-sense was often apparent, mainly, perhaps, in the Knight's Meeting. This was, of course, Shavian in idea and execution, and as a means of debunking standard history as well as stock, yet ever-living, characters of humanity was both stimulating and amusing.

The chorus of Canterbury Women was an interesting experiment which I feel was not as successful as it might have been. The author has given the chorus many fine speeches which do read well but are very difficult to stage properly, being both long and very liable to become mere dead verbiage. Personally, I felt that the chorus was more a nuisance than anything else. Posed as it was on the forestage, it gave the feeling of a curtain of words clouding the real action of the play. Shorter speeches and more definite acting and action for the chorus would have helped. As it was the chorus never fused with the play, and beautifully trained as they were by Miss Elsie Fogarty, speaking as they did in marvellous unison, one felt that they were introduced more for effect than for any other reason. The voices were too "refined," the posing and gesture too stylised to allow of anything else.

One thing Mr. Martin Browne got from the chorus was really lovely—the single voice repeating "living and partly living" in the second speech of the chorus. To him also was due the "business" of the Second Tempter—how many affairs of State are now being arranged between golf-strokes, I wonder?—and of the Knights Meeting after the murder. To him also was due the rather unpleasant stylised "murder" and the absurd stage picture at the end of Becket's shrine. Granted that the lines suggested the future pilgrimage to this shrine, why not leave it to them and to our imagination?

I have, in my last article, already praised Robert Speaight's Becket—I can only add that I still cannot think of the part being done any other way—it was so simple and direct and *alive*. No saccharine sentiment here. Of the other actors, Guy Belmore's First Tempter and Frank Macey's First Priest were outstanding. Mr. Martin Browne as Fourth Tempter disappointed me—there was no echo of Becket, as there should be, this being his *alter ego*. Rather was there a tendency to lusciousness in his speaking, to admire his own verse speaking, which really was fine. His Fourth Knight was much better, but the First and Second Knights, played by Guy Belmore and Norman Chidgey, were the best of these.

Finally, the décor. This was the weakest thing in the production and it *was* bad. Apart from good symbolic costumes for the Tempters, both settings and costumes were too often cheap, drably coloured and oppressive. Much more could have been made of the play if the décor were better; but two hours of black and dingy blue curtains plus spotlighting are more than I at any rate can put up with.

While on the topic of religious plays, I should like to mention a production

of the last scene of Martinez Sierra's "Holy Night" by the Pilgrim Players, at the Father Matthew Hall, where a prizewinners' show was held by the Marian Arts Guild, which is aiming at the encouragement of a Christian approach to the arts. The Guild's Drama Festival was well supported and was justified by this production alone. The setting was good though not finished in style—only half simplified—but the costumes were really fine, while the production, grouping and lighting were also good. I want, however, particularly to commend the players for their approach to the play and its treatment, the feeling of faith, of unsentimental spirituality and not merely formal piety that shone out again and again. One or two were mechanical, others were unduly harsh in speaking, but those playing the Madonna and the Ragpicker, especially, always held the stage and kept the spirit of the play intact. Although there was here just as much intensity of feeling as in the Gate show there was no oppressiveness, but rather exhilarating life and feeling. I look forward to more shows of this type, and hope all concerned will avoid, as was done here, the ever-present tendency to lapse into gimcrack decoration and sentiment.

SEAN O MEADHRA

THE DUBLIN LITTLE THEATRE GUILD has just concluded its second year. In the past year it has presented plays by French, English, American and Irish authors, including a comedy written by a member, Sean Styles, Pádraic Pearse's "The Singer," and the "Taming of the Shrew," by Shakespeare. In addition, members fitted out a Theatre-Studio where these shows were held. Settings, costumes, properties and lighting plant were all designed and made by Guild members, a basic item of Guild policy.

An equally interesting programme has been arranged for next year, beginning on September 1st next, including a public showing of the "Taming of the Shrew" at the end of September, as well as a show consisting of—Pearse's "Singer," with special music and ballet composed by Eamonn O Gallchobhair, a ballet and orchestral entracte also by him, and Chas. Rann Kennedy's "The Terrible Meek"—to be given in the Gate at the end of October. Other productions will be selected from Bruno Frank's "Twelve Thousand," Ibsen's "Little Eyolf," T. S. Eliot's "Sweeney Agonistes," a Japanese No play, "Atsumoti" (translated by Arthur Waley), a play by Sean O'Casey, and possibly "Hamlet" or "Romeo and Juliet," etc.

Active members and associate members are urgently required—as membership is limited early application is advisable. A school of acting is provided for members, so that lack of experience is no bar and associates are also privileged in various ways. A detailed syllabus will be gladly sent on application to Hon. Sec., 41 S.C. Road, Dublin. The Theatre Studio is reere of Home Market Shop, 107 St. Stephen's Green.

S. O M.

FILMS

Riders to the Sea. Production : BRIAN DESMOND HURST. When it was decided that Synge's play was to be filmed there were several courses open to the producers. One was to retain the idea and scrap the incident. Another was to give a straight photographed version of the Abbey play. And looming over all was the danger of additional dialogue and incident with their inevitable comic relief and love interest.

Seeing the picture in the theatre its first effect is to disarm the critic. Here is something which goes clean against all that one has learnt to expect from the commercial cinema. The stark tragedy is retained. No box office banalities are allowed to come between the film and its theme. The mood is held. The acting is of a realistic, hard, unsentimentalized quality. But in spite of many attributes which make for greatness the film fails to reach that level, mainly due to a bad continuity—the old fault of no previsualisation in the scenario. Cinema demands special vision and feeling for visual ideas in flux. This is not born of the demands of a special subject but must be innate in all a producer's work. It is absent in *Riders to the Sea*.

There is, however, a certain unity about the film which is occasion for a critic to throw restraint to the winds in his praise of the cameraman. The photography in this film is the finest I have ever seen on the screen, and this with memories of Flaherty, Golovnia and Perinal. Shot is linked to shot through the sympathetic quality infused by the cameraman. How one's excitement was raised in the opening by the horsemen racing beside the surf—a feeling for cinema that failed to appear in the continuity. The black-shawled women coming down the hill as the wailing comes from the beach. One recalls shot after shot vivid in their feeling for subject. Faces, groupings, exteriors, all were perfect.

Towards the end the restraining influence of Synge was felt in the acting in one sense and in the film in another. Allgood is a great tragedienne, who loses nothing in her screen work. She can blend into an exterior shot as into a stage set and in close-up her face modulates itself with subtle effect, which is seldom achieved even by those whose only claim is to be film actors.

The other players were good. Ria Mooney and Shelagh Richards as the daughters and Denis Johnston and Kelvin McGuthrie as the sons. The latter was somewhat out of the picture when he spoke, yet by a quiet sincerity he justified his presence in the film. Brigit Laffey, for whom great things are claimed, failed to show any special talent as material for cinema, and all I was conscious of was a sense of strain and even of hostility to the camera.

Even if it is not a great film I almost think that it is our best film to date. And by how little it missed greatness.

LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE.

Ourselves Alone. Direction : WALTER SUMMERS AND BRIAN DESMOND HURST. Action encircling a triangle situation. An R.I.C. romance in the Tan War. The human treatment effected a delicate balance and the fact that the romantic appeal lay on the wrong side was nicely countered by the impassioned speech of Niall McGinnis to the R.I.C. Inspector. It is difficult to disentangle one's feelings on the treatment from one's interest in the subject, but it was certainly a gripping picture, which made any incidental *faux pas* of slight importance. The end of the picture was rather spoiled by an heroic renunciation scene.

L. Ó L.

(*Special Article on the Irish Film held over through pressure on space*)

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BOOK SECTION

CHEAP EDITIONS

The majority of our people are too poor to buy expensive books. Even the seven-and-sixpenny novel must be considered beyond their means, not to speak, at all, of the biographies, works of travel, political reviews and such like. How often have we not gone into the farmhouses and seen in the little cleevy by the fire a few tattered school-books, a stray work of fiction, *Moore's Almanack*, and perhaps those very cheap editions of nationalist books that Washbourne used to publish long ago in pale-green paper covers, at sixpence, or a shilling, or two shillings—the *Jail Journal*, *The Secret History of the Land League*. Father Tom Burke's *Lectures*, or A. M. Sullivan's *New Ireland*. At best one found d'Alton's *History* (sold by persuasion) or Canon Sheehan's works; and that, most likely, was a teacher's house.

This is the reality behind all our talk of Irish culture, and about what Ireland has to give, culturally, to the world. Two Saint Patrick's Days ago, the President put his best foot foremost and broadcast, among other things, a long list of Irish writers. Apart from what of these has got into the school-readers (bits of *The Deserted Village*, and the like) these writers are not read, certainly not possessed, outside the derided Anglo-Irish strongholds. As for modern Irish writers, whom the President, cautiously, did not list . . .

Yet, we are convinced that our people are eager enough for books. Any book on modern Irish affairs sells well, even at a dear price, and books that have had a large Irish sale—several thousands, that is to say—have been Dr. Walter McDonald's *Reminiscences of a Maynooth Professor*, Frank Pakenham's *Peace by Ordeal*, MacManus's *Stand and Give Challenge*, Peadar O'Donnell's *Islanders*, several of O'Flaherty's novels, Dan Breen's *My Fight for Irish Freedom*, and the like. Every boy from the country, when I was at school, had read *Knocknagow* and *Sally Cavanagh*, and John Murphy's novels, and were familiar, from the old "Shamrock" with others. (It is not commonly known that Maurice Walsh first appeared in that magazine.)

But that doesn't go very far, and the Minister for Education, in attempting to argue that Irish culture is very fine in what it transmits orally is leaning on a very thin, if not broken reed.

Meanwhile the people do not, on the other hand, live in Eden. The sixpenny slush is selling in every country town. The 'tupenny libraries' are spreading. I once looked across the hearth in a mountainy farmhouse in West Cork to find the girl of the house absorbed in what appeared to be an old school-reader. When I asked permission to see what she was reading she surrendered the book most unwillingly; it was, believe it or not, a cheap translation of Paul de Kock disguised by the cover of some *Ireland's Own Series of School Readers, Fifth Class*. The example, though extreme, speaks for itself.

We draw the attention of the public to the large number of cheap books at present available, in good print, good bindings, good paper; and as an example of the great variety of subjects we here review a few examples from various publishers. Last month we reviewed two similar volumes of the *Noted Irish Lives* series from an Irish firm, The Talbot Press, whose enterprise in the matter of publishing deserves all possible encouragement.

Meanwhile, we venture to suggest that a fund should exist for the giving of book-prizes—cheap books and many of them—to the children of the National Schools. We do not mind what books, not even if they had to be all in Gaelic, for reading is one of those appetites that grows by what it feeds on, and that, in growing, becomes more selective and adventurous.

NELSON CLASSICS

THE PATH TO ROME. Hilaire Belloc. (London : Nelson, 1s. 6d. net).
 UNCANNY STORIES. Ed. St. John Sprigg. (London : Nelson, 1s. 6d. net).
 LATER POEMS OF TENNYSON. (London : Nelson, 1s. 6d. net).
 THE ATOM. E. N. Da C. Andrade. (London : Nelson, 1s. 6d. net).
 HUMPHRY CLINKER. Tobias Smollet. (London : Nelson, 1s. 6d. net).
 SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M. Somerville and Ross. London : Nelson,
 (1s. 6d. net.)

Twenty-five or more years ago a generation that is now becoming middle-aged waited eagerly for the publication of the Nelson volumes : the "Notable Books" in their vivid blue and gold at a shilling ; the "Sevenpenny Novels" in scarlet and gold at sevenpence ; and the "Sixpenny Classics" in their flat-backed, stumpy form at sixpence. At that date, about 1910 or 1911, these books were, at the same time, a boon and a revelation ; a boon to the reader whose pocket-money was scanty, and a revelation to the publishing trade. For the House of Nelson was then a pioneer in this cheap book business, more especially in the publication of copyright books at the amazingly low prices of a shilling or sevenpence. Most of the contemporary novelists of that time I encountered in "Nelson's Sevenpennies," including the first publication of a collection of short stories by H. G. Wells, entitled, *The Country of the Blind*. In the "Notable Books" I particularly remember Barry O'Brien's *Parnell* and Hilaire Belloc's *The Path to Rome* ; and in the "Sixpenny Classics" I first encountered George Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss*. For all these, and for much more that space will not permit to be mentioned, I thank Messrs. Nelson.

To-day the House of Nelson is again prominent with the best books at the lowest price. The "Nelson Classics" appear now in a fadeless cloth binding, with titles blocked in gold and a coloured top. The different sections of the series are bound in different colours, so that the branch of literature to which the volume belongs may be discerned at a glance.

If there is a more interesting travel book than Hilaire Belloc's *The Path to Rome* I have yet to encounter it. I still treasure my little blue Nelson volume in which I first read it, and although I find the new edition in every respect worthy I would have liked the coloured picture inside the book as well as on the dust-wrapper. In any guise *The Path to Rome* is a book to read and keep and re-read, it is the brilliant record of one of the most delightful "hikes" ever undertaken. With a piece of bread, some smoked ham, two newspapers and a sketch-book, and a quart of Brule wine, the young Belloc set out to walk from the Moselle to Rome. What he saw, sang, said, and heard makes the most companionable book ever written. It is Belloc at his youthful best.

Uncanny Stories is a volume filled with "stories by skilled and subtle masters of the macabre, the grim, the peculiar, the supernatural, and the completely hair-raising." An excellent collection ; with a most interesting introduction by Mr. C. St. John Sprigg. Of the *Later Poems of Tennyson* there is no need to say much to-day ; and all that needs to be said will be found in the brilliant introduction by Professor B. Ifor Evans. "The outstanding quality of *Humphry Clinker* is its vigorous life," says Mr. L. A. G. Strong in his introduction to Smollett's last and most kindly book ; and that is the quality that discerning readers will seek in it nowadays. *The Atom* figures so prominently in the non-scientific world to-day that most educated people will want to possess Professor Andrade's popular exposition, which is as lucid as the non-scientific reader can demand and as enthralling as a Wells' romance.

Of *Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.*, by Somerville and Ross, it is necessary only to say that even those who resent that particular type of Anglo-Irish literature will come to like Flurry Knox. In a more self-conscious and possibly a more enlightened period, Flurry Knox will be given his predestined place in the social history of Ireland, and nowhere can he be studied more amusingly or more microscopically than in this very popular volume.

A. M.

TRAVELLERS' LIBRARY

(*Jonathan Cape.*)

- ISLANDERS. By Peadar O'Donnell. 3s. 6d.
 THE MEN OF NESS. By Eric Linklater. 3s. 6d.
 DUBLINERS. By James Joyce. 3s. 6d.
 PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN. By James Joyce. 3s. 6d.
 SPRING SOWING. By Liam O'Flaherty. 3s. 6d.
 TWO YEARS. By Liam O'Flaherty. 3s. 6d.
 THE AMATEUR POACHER. By Richard Jeffries. 3s. 6d.
 THE ASSASSIN. By Liam O'Flaherty. 2s. *Florin Book.*
 THE BLACK SOUL. By Liam O'Flaherty. 2s. *Florin Book.*

Here are a few books of the type that is likely to interest Irish readers, chosen mainly from the recent additions to *The Traveller's Library*, one of the most graceful of the fine cheap editions which are now available from almost every publisher. They are pocket editions, with a pleasing dust-wrapper, but they really look so well that one is far more likely to put them on one's bookshelves as a treasured possession. To find them in a cheap series means that the publisher thinks them books of permanent value, and reconsideration at this date must admit the justice of the claim.

Apart from the two books by Joyce, relentless, analytical, studies of Dublin life, pitying and yet pitiless, they are books of the open-air.

Islanders is one of those books that, as one turns the page, seems to send one a waft of the turf-smoke and the tang of the sea. Its reality takes it out of the realm of print and paper altogether; it is an experience, not a book, and to read it is to know O'Donnell's people as no Irish writer before him, unless it be Carleton, has made us know the people of our own land. I put beside it Linklater's *Men of Ness*, because that, too, deals with island folk—the Viking seamen of the Hebrides and the Orkneys. It may well stand beside O'Donnell because it has the same strain of iron in it, and the same sense of the wild splash of the sea under the prow or the foam leaping up from the rocks. More tender, nearer to poetry, is O'Flaherty's *Spring Sowing*—one of the loveliest, most lyrical, and at the same time, most human of Irish books—perhaps the best book O'Flaherty has yet written. These two books must have done more than any other books written by Irishmen of our day—the Somerville and Ross books did it twenty years ago—to make Ireland seem at once glamorous and vital to strangers. They have the touch that makes Ireland a foreign land—not of Europe or of the century; and they do it by keeping to reality as experienced intimately and intensely. The transition to Richard Jeffries, *The Amateur Poacher*, is easy—an ideal pocket book, the kind of magical book (like Hudson's or Gilbert White's) that sent one as a boy exploring the open road and the shadows of the hedges.

This series contains, now, over 200 titles ranging from Pater to Powys, from Robert Lynd's quiet *Books and Authors* to that terrible book of Hector Bolitho, *Murder for Profit*. It differs from other series in that it is more catholic and

modern. Beside it may be put the same publisher's Florin Books (2s. each) which contains the two O'Flaherty titles listed above, and about one hundred other titles, practically all modern, including such names as Maurois, Beverley Nichols, Sinclair Lewis, Mary Webb and the late Earl of Birkenhead—truly marvellous value for the money.

S. O'F.

THE EVERYMAN LIBRARY

TALES OF DETECTION. By Dorothy Sayers. 2s. 0d.

A SHEPHERD'S LIFE. By W. H. Hudson. 2s. 0d.

OUR VILLAGE. By Miss Mitford. 2s. 0d.

HISTORY OF GERMANY. By H. Pinnow. 2s. 0d.

SELECTED ESSAYS. By Havelock Ellis. 2s. 0d.

The Everyman books are, amongst a host of rivals, probably the best known of the cheap editions. This is partly due to the very attractive format, partly to the fact that these books are obtainable in various bindings, but, in the main, due to the great variety of titles, to which these five new volumes bear testimony. The publishers have been enterprising at the beginning and adventurous towards the end, for while it is sufficiently easy to think of one or two hundred titles which everybody might like to have on his shelves, it requires a good deal more imagination and knowledge of the public's taste, as the total nears the one thousand mark. There can scarcely be any reader whose youthful thirst was not slaked at the moderate price of Everyman books. Prose, poetry, travel, biography, each with its own particular binding, are they not all on our shelves with their memories of early delights, and it is not merely a tribute to the attraction of their contents but to the excellence of their physical make-up that they last with us to the end.

It will be noted that in these five new volumes there is only one, the delightful detective stories of Miss Dorothy Sayers, which comes within the radius of the modern popular "Cheap Book." The other four, like the great majority of Everyman books, are definitely books which might not otherwise be procurable by the reader with a long thirst but a small purse. It is good to see Hudson's *A Shepherd's Life* again, and good to see this almost lyrical volume of Miss Mitford's, the forerunner of so many modern personal biographies, which with less reticence did not achieve half the sense of intimacy or quality. Pinnow's *History of Germany*, in view of modern events, well deserves to go side by side with the other historical books in the same series, and most of us will agree that Havelock Ellis deserves that earnest of immortality which it gives any author to be put into this library.

F. D.

TWO ESSAYS IN ORDER

GOD AND MAMMON. By François Mauriac. (*Sheed and Ward*. 2s. 6d.)

CHRISTIANITY AND RACE. By Johannes Pinski. (*Sheed and Ward*. 2s. 6d.).

M. Mauriac's essay is subjective, intensely personal, and self-revelatory. He delineates for us the psychology of the novelist of to-day as he himself sees that psychology. To write, he says, is to hand oneself over—the writer reveals himself to the reader and reveals aspects of himself which he may desire to conceal or which he may not even know himself to possess. He proceeds to demonstrate the truth of this delineation in his succeeding chapters. He describes his tortured adolescence and his peculiar attitude to his religion—his intense belief in the necessity and inevitability of the Cross. And he uses the life and death of Rimbaud as an illustration of this inevitability.

The impression of its author which this essay gives is that of a man of intensely sensitive conscience, an almost morbid introvert. It is perhaps his chapter on the Responsibility of the Novelist which will be of most interest to his readers. Here is a man, a believing Christian and a writer who, he says, cannot leave off writing, confronted by a problem which he seems unable to resolve. His problem is: should a novelist, however scrupulous he may be, falsify the facts of life, and change the very object of his study, in order not to offend or unsettle his readers?

On his one hand Mauriac finds those whose only care is that a work of art should edify, on his other those who think that a work of art is its own justification. It may well be questioned if this problem has any real existence whether Mauriac, sensitive-conscienced, introspective, scrupulous, with his 'instinctive Jansenism' and acceptance of the rigorism of Pascal and Bossuet, does not establish a non-existent contradiction between the life according to nature and the life according to grace. In the last and most serene and satisfying pages of this book, Mauriac describes a conversation with a friend: "Who was it who dared to say that 'Christianity played no part in the flesh?'" he asked me. I was ashamed to remind him that it was myself, and could only hang my head.'

Dr. Pinsk's essay is of peculiar interest in that its author attempts to determine the place of his nation—the German nation—within the Church at a time when so many of his fellow Germans consider any union between the race and the Church to be impossible. His central thesis is that: 'As the body of Christ was that of a Jewish man, so is the bodily manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in the Church, that of the Roman-Hellenistic culture.' The Church, he says, has adopted its forms from this human culture. The Church has adopted the forms of the ancient Mysteries, she has adopted the hellenistic philosophy through which she states her doctrine, in the outward organisation of her society she resembles rather the Roman Imperium than the German dukedom.

He finds a fundamental principle of the German soul to be that of 'self-sufficiency,' and he finds the weakness and disunion of the German race, to which this self-sufficiency has led to have been overcome, when it has been overcome, with the aid of a Roman element—the Roman Church and Roman law. He examines the effect which these Germanic principles have had upon the Liturgy and upon Benedictine monachism and finds that in each case they have led to a greater activity and flowering of life.

The mission of the German within the Church he finds to lie in the fact that the Germans are the peoples of reform—their sense of personal responsibility' is continually urging them to create new life within the Church.

THOMAS FITZGERALD.

GROSSETÊTE

ROBERT GROSSETÊTE. By B. C. Boulter. (*S.P.C.K.*, 5s.).

Mr. B. C. Boulter's biography of Robert Grossetête is a book well worth reading. The brilliant religious internationalism of the 13th century had no finer representative amongst Englishmen than this country man from Suffolk who rose to be the first Chancellor of Oxford, and one of the moving spirits in the religious life of England. We must surely count amongst the creative epochs of history the epoch which saw Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Dominic, Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Emperor Frederic II., and Saint Louis of France, all in the world together. The mere mention of their names gives the measure

of how far the intellectual and moral life of 13th century England lagged behind that of Continental Christendom, for there is no comparison possible between this essentially mediocre Englishman and the saints, prophets, and speculative geniuses then dominating the Continent. There is a good deal to be said for the claim that Grossetête united in a remarkable manner those qualities of inspired common sense and humanity which are fondly believed by some Englishmen to be the special birthright of their race. Although his zeal for the reform of the clergy in England involved him in repeated protests against the appointment of non-resident foreigners to English benefices, he was the pattern of an orthodox medieval bishop. The author is therefore quite right in insisting on the hopelessness of the attempts to convert Grossetête into a proto-type of the English Protestant reformer of three centuries later. Yet, strange to say, throughout his book runs the suggestion that a little more friction and Grossetête would have rebelled against Papal authority. Wishes father thought, but they do not father evidence, and in this matter all the evidence is to the contrary. If, on one celebrated occasion, Grossetête told the Pope to his face what he thought of the covetuous and corrupt ecclesiastics to be found even in Rome itself, it was not unusual for a Churchman of his international prestige to speak like this. One of the works of Saint Bernard most widely read at this time was his Treatise *De Consideratione*, addressed to Pope Eugenius III., to remind him that, if his power was supreme in the Church, it was not exclusive, and should not be tyrannical. And the language used by Saint Catherine of Sienna to another Pope, a century or so after Grossetête's time, was no less severe.

JAMES HOGAN.

SAINTS IN THE DESERT

THE DESERT FATHERS. By Helen Waddell. (*Constable*, 7s. 6d.).

All who know the sincere, careful and delicate talent displayed by Helen Waddell in *The Wandering Scholars*, *Beasts and Saints*, and *Medieval Latin Lyrics* will hardly need to be told that they must read her latest work, *The Desert Fathers*. This beautifully produced and inexpensive book is not, as the title might suggest, a general study of the monachism which flourished in the East in the 4th century, but is a selection of ten translations from the Latin of the *Vitae Patrum*, as edited early in the 17th century by Heribert Rosweyde, S.J.

The phenomenon of the eremitic and cenobitic life affords a striking example of what Prof. Toynbee has called the motif of withdrawal and return, the withdrawal of the creative personality from his social milieu, and his subsequent return to the same milieu with his ideas worked out; transfigured, having conquered himself now to conquer the world. A manichean hatred of life is wrongly presumed of the fathers of the desert. *Qui veut faire l'ange fait la bête*! Of some of the desert anchorites Pascal's saying is nearly true, but these were the eccentrics. For one Simon Stylites, the desert bred a hundred in the mould of Saint Anthony, St. Jerome and Saint Basil. Saint Antony, who was as hard on himself as he was kind to others, stressed the goodness of human nature. And the forms of prayer common to all types of Eastern monachism reveal a happy and confident faith. But the essence of the Desert teaching was its tremendous challenge to the "ancient anarchy of cruelty and pride" which once again overshadow the world.

JAMES HOGAN.

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

PORTRAIT OF T. E. LAWRENCE. By Vyvyan Richards. (*Jonathan Cape*. 8s. 6d.).

Vyvyan Richards writes as an old personal friend of Lawrence of Arabia—that remarkable product of the Great War generation, who has become almost a cult in England.

The author's portrait of his hero, amply supplied with extracts from his writings and letters, gives us intimate glimpses of the thoughts, habits, hopes, and reflections of a many sided character—soldier, successful leader, writer, mystic, and champion of an oppressed race. Mr. Richards has done well by his friend and hero, and his book is almost a personal introduction. He gives an interesting picture of Lawrence as an undergraduate. They were at Oxford together and shared the same tastes, both being admirers of William Morris, and both enthusiastic students of the medieval.

Mr. Richards seems to have known Lawrence better than either Graves or Liddel-Hart, and at times almost show resentment at any other but his own judgment. This does not lessen interest, it rather adds spice to the portrait. The book is illustrated with some fine likenesses of Lawrence, some examples of his own highly skilled photography, and two useful maps.

JOHN LUCY

AN INDIAN NATIONALIST

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU. An Autobiography. (*The Bodley Head*, 15s.).

INDIA AND THE WORLD. Jawaharlal Nehru. (*Allen and Unwin*, 5s.).

This book, written in prison like many of the works of our own political leaders of the past, covers practically the whole history of India's fifteen years' struggle for independence under Ghandi, of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was and is another great driving force. He comes of a distinguished family of scholars and law givers. He was educated at Harrow and Cambridge, and like his famous father was called to the Bar. Normally he would have possessed every worldly advantage enjoyed by a highly educated Indian of a very privileged class, respected by British and Indians of all castes, but he chose instead the thorny path of Indian politics.

Nehru, between two extremes condemns the terrorists, and is not enamoured of the milder course of non-co-operation, in which, because of its principle of inaction, he foresaw a final weakening of the national spirit. His own policy is nearer socialism than Communism, and his astute survey of India's immediate problems is well-balanced and impartial.

He is more interesting on politics generally, religions, sex—those bugbears of those afraid to think—as well as when he deals with the debunking of the British Die-Hard, the tradition of sin and suffering, the futility of living in the past, the Indian Civil Service, vested interests, Capitalism and what-not.

The Pandit, like many of his countrymen, has a sense of humour and a sense of fair-play, will not condemn a whole race, is quite sporting to his oppressors, and likes the individual English (always excepting the bone-headed Die-Hard). Here he has his immediate reward, for what other country would print such a condemnation of its own ruling classes for all the world to see?

This rare book should be in the hands of every student of the changing East.

India and the World is an arresting collection of letters and Essays in which the Congress leader, in his usual lucid and trenchant manner, expounds his socialistic solution to the problem of India's independence, in answer to the English point of view. It contains an inspiring chapter on prison reform.

JOHN LUCY.

INTERIOR TRAVEL

JOURNEY WITHOUT MAPS. By Graham Greene. (*Heinemann*, 15s.).

Mr. Greene's book is full of nobility and folly. It tells of a journey through unmapped Liberia and of an inner, spiritual "journey without maps" back to . . . what? Mr. Greene tentatively answers "to Innocence," but the correct answer is "to Disintegration." The physical journey is magnificently told: it gives the best picture and smell of Africa I have ever met in a book. Everything the author says about food, women, insects, and especially about Bush Devils is deady accurate (his nice missionaries *do* exist but are hardly typical). Furthermore, Mr. Greene was sensitive to the warm and sleepy beauty of Africa, to its gay and lazy dignity and can think of Baudelaire's:

*Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté
Luxe, calme et volupté.*

Mr. Greene did not lose that impression of rich and calm beauty; perhaps because he did not stay long enough, but more probably because the inner journey set the focus for viewing the outer.

That inner journey well illustrates what is happening to the European intellect. Mr. Greene with a powerful intelligence and "an intellectual if not an emotional belief in Catholic dogma" travels the spiritual road so indefatigably steam-rolled by Messieurs Malraux and Celine. He first throws a few terrified glances at the seediness of civilisation, at the injustice of Society and at the half-truths and whole-lies of psychology (especially those grossly magnified bugbears, Sadism and Masochism). In despair, his intellect grabs at the life-line of belief in the Freudian theory of "the pull of ancestral threads" and orders his body off to some primitive land (Western Liberia in his case; Penang, Cochin-China, the Congo for the French devotees), there to seek the final nothingness "Where the race goes back into the womb," "the innocence, the virginity of as far back as one needed to go." Inevitably, Mr. Greene finds what he seeks, not in Africa, but in the wailing of a child at Dover on his return—(the child "possessed the ancestral fear, the devil was dancing in its sleep.") There you are! Civilisation, having failed to run away from its own tail, turns round and thinks to eat it.

All Irishmen who do not read the French intelligentsia should read this book. For it will make them glad to belong to a "barbarous" country that has not yet begun to integrate itself. Better, far better, live in hopeful ignorance than in civilised despair and disintegration.

MICHAEL BURKE.

OSCAR WILDE

ASPECTS OF WILDE. By Vincent O'Sullivan. (*Constable*, 10s. net).

In this intensely felt and crystal clear narrative of Wilde's closing years Vincent O'Sullivan has given us a vindication which was long overdue. Every word of this too brief story breathes authenticity, and he would be a bold, and, I fear, a foolish critic who would question the truth of any statement in the book, for Mr. O'Sullivan is one of the few living writers who had an opportunity of meeting, and speaking with Wilde during those tragic years. And while the writer does not in any way attempt to lessen the tragic aspect he has, very wisely, made full use of those gay, and wise, and witty sayings which continued to illuminate the conversation of the exiled man of genius through all the horror of his lonely state, and up to the very moment of his death. Some of the epigrams are already familiar to us through the records of other writers, but here we have, too, many which have never seen the light,

and many which only Mr. O'Sullivan could have given to us. Here, too, we have at last a refutation—a complete refutation, of that vile anecdote which is to be found in the biography of Wilde's unworthy college companion whose forsenic skill drove the great writer to exile and death, and whose enmity would seem to have pursued him—even beyond the grave.

Apart altogether from its value as a record of Wilde's closing years, Mr. O'Sullivan's book is of very great importance for the light which it throws on the principal figures of the "Nineties" in England. Dowson, Beardsley, Conder and Symons move through its pages with all their strange ways of life in this record of one who was "of them." And here, too, most fascinating of all for the rich, and intense interest, and memory which have recreated him for us, is that weird creature Leonard Smithers, the publisher of *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, and 'The Savoy,' and all the various writings of Dowson, Wilde, Beardsley and others who might have found it difficult if not impossible to achieve publication in that prudish age.

Messrs. Constable are to be congratulated on the format and appearance of this book, which would have won praise—even amongst the beautiful volumes of "The Nineties."

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

AUSTIN CLARKE

COLLECTED POEMS. By Austin Clarke. (*Allen and Unwin*, 7s. 6d.).

Austin Clarke revealed himself at once as a poet of distinction when—at the age of twenty-one—he published *The Vengeance of Fionn*. Since then the quality of his talent has never been in dispute among competent critics. Nevertheless, it is curiously difficult to define his position in modern Anglo-Irish literature. He is neither a product of the so-called Celtic Renaissance nor a reaction from it: his work, despite the main sources of its inspiration, owes reasonably little to that of the earlier Yeats—just as it remains remarkably uninfluenced by contemporary poetic developments. It is this very originality that constitutes Mr. Clarke's most serious weakness as a poet. He falls as it were between two Schools. One cannot help feeling that his concern with mythological themes has inhibited the development of his remarkable poetic gifts.

His success in the treatment of such themes is unquestionable. His poems based on Irish legends gain greatly from the fact that he—unlike many of his predecessors in this genre—had first-hand access to his sources. There is no pseudo-Celtic twilight atmosphere, no vague undefined emotion. *The Vengeance of Fionn* has an admirable virility and terseness; everything is precise and definite, the images having frequently an exact loveliness worthy of Keats:

Flower-quiet in the rush-strewn sheiling
At the dawntime Grainne lay,
While beneath the birch-topped roof the sunlight
Groped upon its way,
And stooped above her sleeping white body
With a wasp-yellow ray.

His preoccupation with mythology, however, would seem, indeed, to betray reluctance or inability to recognise contemporary trends. He is not, in other words, a modern poet.

In an otherwise redundant preface to this volume, Mr. Padraic Colum has stressed the importance of Clarke's verse-structure. Its most notable feature

is the extraordinarily subtle use of assonance—an important contribution to Anglo-Irish poetry, for which he has scarcely received sufficient credit.

The present collection contains all the poems which Mr. Clarke wishes to preserve, including his dramatic verse, while among the shorter lyrics there are some of the finest examples of his work, for instance, *The Lost Heifer* :

When the black herds of the rain were grazing
In the gap of the pure cold wind
And the watery hazes of the hazel
Brought her into my mind,
I thought of the last honey by the water
That no hive can find.

Brightness was drenching through the branches
When she wandered again,
Turning the silver out of dark grasses
Where the skylark had lain
And her voice coming softly over the meadow
Was the mist becoming rain.

NIALL SHERIDAN.

ENGLISH LIBERALISM DIES

THE STRANGE DEATH OF LIBERAL ENGLAND. By George Dangerfield.
(Constable and Co. 12s. 6d.).

Those who wish to read a convincing account of the disintegration of Liberalism as a party faith, on the other side of the water, will find the whole story in Mr. George Dangerfield's "The Strange Death of Liberal England." And those who are attracted by such a narration in a setting of brilliant and sustained paradox, having once begun to read, will find some difficulty in setting down the book until they have reached the last page. From beginning to end, the author's pen never flags. He holds the reader, as it were, by the button, and traces the decay of Liberal principles to three great insubordinations—the Tory Rebellion, the Women's Rebellion, and the Worker's Rebellion. The whole story is palpitating with life, and if one might indicate one or two defects of treatment, the writing is sometimes tinged with a certain irreverence for individuals and institutions—that, however, is the Englishman's own business—and sometimes the ability to say the agreeably malicious thing often leaves the reader in a state of mental apnoea.

It is hardly necessary to state that the section of the work dealing with the Tory Rebellion is the one which will, most of all, attract the interest of an Irish public. We are presented with a series vignettes of the principal characters who flit across the stage of politics between the years 1906 and 1914,—King Edward, who "was never tyrannical, never loud or ill-mannered, but just comfortably disreputable"; Arthur James Balfour, who played his game "with the faintly supercilious finesse which belongs to a bachelor of breeding"; F. E. Smith, "whose eyes and hair were lustrous; the first from nature, the second from too much oil"; John Redmond, to whom the dignified ritual of Parliament, "its devices, and subterfuges, and intrigues all meant more than perhaps they should mean to an Irish leader"; Edward Carson, Lloyd George, and the kaleidoscopic Winston Churchill. The story of the latter's escapade in Sidney Street is a masterpiece. The sense of conviction carried by Mr. Dangerfield's pen is, however, a little shaken when we find Eoin MacNeill described as a temperamental Celtic Scholar, with some gift for demagoguery.

Whatever Professor Mac Neill was in 1913, he was far from being an emotionalist, and it was no part of his appeal that he could sway his audience with cheap sophistries. However, there we are! We must confess that the author deals very fairly with the Irish side of the situation—with John Redmond, tied, as we now see him, to the galley oar of English Liberalism; with Casement, Pearse and Connolly—though he has not the same instinct for understanding and summing up the activities of this latter group. “The Strange Death of English Liberalism” is a remarkable book, the main fault of its style being an occasional tendency to indulge in mental gymnastics. The reviewer hereby gives formal notice that he is not lending the book to anyone. It shall remain on his bookshelf.

S.F.

LITERATURE AND PROPAGANDA

NEW WRITING. Edited by John Lehmann. Spring, 1936. (*The Bodley Head*. 6s.).

This reviewer could find nothing particularly “New” about this magazine. Ralph Bates again chooses Spain as the setting for one of his moving stories of negative endurance. Stephen Spender contributes four poems which, to the traditional eye, seem quite typical of Spender’s art. William Plomer writes artistically about Ireland. There is a long, slow extract from an unpublished novel by Edward Upward. Other artists among the contributors are Christopher Isherwood, Ognev (who wrote *The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy*), André Chamson, Editor of the Anti-Fascist “Vendredi,” Ralph Fox, Tchang T’ien-Yih, Tikhonov and Boris Pasternak. The remaining contributors offer heightened records of all the temporary cries (Nazi and Fascist brutality, Capitalism, etc.), and some of them try to do so under the guise of literature. It is all very intelligent, very competent. And much of it is quite meaningless to those who are uninterested in warmed-up slabs of life.

MICHAEL BURKE.

NATIONALISM IN THE SIX COUNTIES

THE BIRTH OF ULSTER. By Cyril Falls. (*Methuen*, 10s. 6d.).

If the Irish Free State, which calls itself Ireland, believes strongly in the ennobling virtue of Nationalism, why should not the Six Counties, which call themselves Ulster, also develop a local tradition? Mr. Cyril Falls sees no reason why not. But the Gaelic tradition before the Plantation he rejects, arguing that it did not create the essential character of the modern Six Counties. If we protest he will reply that we, in the South, reject the Anglo-Irish tradition for identical reasons.

If that thesis is not Mr. Fall’s main concern in this book it is his main interest, for while he sets out to write, dispassionately, the history of the O’Neill-O’Donnell revolt, and the Plantation that followed—and he tells it right well—he allows his narrative to be coloured by his thesis throughout. (So, at one point, Tuirleach Luineach, for whom he has a “weakness,” is “besotted with drink”; at another he is good “old sherry-swilling Tuirleach”—a wavering of the approach which one recognises as being due to wavering emotions. Or “The kernes set about the congenial task of beheading the wounded and plundering the dead.” It may have been congenial.) This kind of thing must impugn any historian’s detachment.

We may welcome this book. It is the obvious answer to our traditionalists—the *Contention of the Bards* all over again, Belfast versus the Blaskets; and

one Hidden Ireland seems to be just about as "valid" and as arid as the other. While the two of them fight it out we may turn back gratefully to Edmund Curtis's magnificent *History*—the book of a man interested chiefly in the rise of a genuine culture out of a seed of order, which neither Belfast nor the Blaskets ever knew.

S. O. F.

A BLASKET STORY-TELLER

PEIG .I. A SGÉAL FÉIN, do scríobh Peig Sayers. Máire Ní Chinnéide, M.A., do chuir i n-eagar. (*Clólucht an Talbóidigh*, 6s.).

ÓS CIONN NA FAIRGE AGUS AISTÍ EILE. Pádraig Mac Piarais do scríobh. (*Comhlucht Oideachais na hÉireann*, 1s. 6d.).

The story of Peig Sayers's life, as dictated by her to her son, Mícheál Ó Guithín, and edited by Máire Ní Chinnéide, is as perfect a work of art as the two Blasket autobiographies which preceded it. In it Peig presents readers of Irish with a vivid picture of her early years spent among Irish-speakers on the Dingle peninsula and of the years of her married life lived among contemporaries of Tomás Ó Criomhthain on the Great Blasket island. The picture given by Peig of Gaeltacht life is a little softer and much less cynical than that given by Tomás. Nevertheless, the Gaeltacht described by her is essentially the same as that described by Tomás, a Gaeltacht of a rich and satisfying complexity that guarantees the depth of its reality, a Kerry Gaeltacht very similar to the Galway Gaeltacht described by Peadar Mac Thuathaláin in the book of reminiscences he dictated to Seán Mac Giollarnáth, very different from the romantically-seen, unsatisfying, superficial Gaeltacht which certain modern writers tend to paint for us. To make so complex a reality live in the pages of a book, to unite in one picture its drink, its piety, its laughter and hardship, its poetry, its wildness and its homeliness, is a great artistic achievement, an achievement normally to be expected only from one who has served a long apprenticeship to the craft which he is practising. The success of Peig Sayers and her predecessors is no exception to this rule, for they have, in fact, served a long apprenticeship to a traditional craft of which many masters are still to be found in Irish-speaking districts, the craft of vivid descriptive conversation, enlivened by anecdote, epigram, proverb and poetry. In books such as this autobiography dictated to her son by Peig Sayers, and on the lips of countless native speakers of Irish, is to be found that rich realistic "literature" which a public trained to attach undue importance to writing imagines has still to be created in Irish.

Os Cionn na Fairge consists of eleven newspaper articles and three poems in Irish by Pearse, hitherto unpublished in book form. *Os Cionn na Fairge*, when contrasted with Peig's book, is seen to give an unsatisfying romantic picture of the Gaeltacht, almost as far removed from the rich complexity of the real Gaeltacht as the flower-fairies of English story-books are from the *sluagh sídhe* of Irish tradition. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that it is to these and similar essays, articles, and speeches by Patrick Pearse that the effort at present being made to preserve the civilisation of the Gaeltacht is largely due.

G. M.

FICTION

NO WANT OF MEAT, SIR. A Collection of New Stories. Edited by John Hackney. (Grayson, 7s. 6d.).

The pleasure to be gained in reading a collection of stories by a single author—observing the changing activities of the same imagination, and the varied

applications of the same style must inevitably be denied to the reader of the anthology, who is borne hither and thither like the reader of a magazine, with no fixed abode in which to settle down and enjoy himself. But subject to this intrinsic disadvantage *No Want of Meat, Sir*, is an amazingly good collection of stories. To say the least, it thoroughly justifies its ambitious title. It contains eighteen stories by different authors, and each in its own way is well worth reading. Space does not permit a detailed criticism of every story but a sketch of outstanding excellence is provided by H. E. Bates in his account of how a little boy tried in vain to get the autograph of the renowned contralto and the distinguished bass and what he saw through the keyhole. The furnishings of this story are altogether admirable—particularly the contralto's reiterated *Thanks*. W. J. Beaumont in *Postman's Knock* builds up an admirable mystery about a woman who ran away from a lodging house: but the suspense of the reader's judgment, which must be the aim of the story, is spoilt by his failure to dispose of her luggage. James Hanley in his story of the madness and suicide of a young man who discovers a corpse in the train has chosen a subject in which the nightmare so dominates over the real as to make, perhaps, a less harrowing effect than, for instance, in *The Last Voyage*. Sean O'Faolain in *There's a Birdie in the Cage* gets a kind of trigonometrical bearing on his characters by observing them from several angles. The episode of the lovers in the punt, seen in retrospect through the eyes of one of them, is told with a rare sense of beauty. Other contributors, all to be commended, are Rhys Davies, John Hampson, Arthur Calder-Marshall, L.A. Pavey, H. A. Manhood, J. P. Hogan, Sidney Vogler and Graham Greene.

BRYAN GUINNESS.

THE LAST ENEMY. By L. A. G. Strong. (*Gollancz*, 7s. 6d.).

Between reticence and obviousness many fine novels fall to the ground, but few suffer hurt from too much of *both* the one and the other. I must say that *The Last Enemy* does, because I admired it so much, found it so moving—almost unbearably so, at times—was so amazed by its reality, its impressive truth-to-life in all the big scenes, that it seems right to dispose at once of the weakness in it which has puzzled most of us reviewers. *The Last Enemy* is Death, but it is as much Death-in-Life—"Anything that destroys and vilifies the real purpose of life"—as our mortal end. Denis Boyle, super-sensitive to life and to this double shadow that Death casts over life, carries in his person "the burthen of the mystery," and has a number of experiences meant to define it. In a sense they do—in the sense that we feel the tramp of the apocalyptic horse all through the book; but it seems to me to be a somewhat obvious method, and to breed, at times, a somewhat obvious style, *e.g.*,

The Inquest was over. The world had done its worst: the ugly light of publicity, the questions on the witness stand, the protracted snigger of the Sergeant had died down . . .

On the other hand the idea of life being thwarted by mortality is touched more faintly, less clearly, and after Denis has lain bare his soul in the beginning of the book, on this matter, we do not get much further real illumination about it.

In saying this one really does no more than indicate how much the heart is teased—even tormented—by *The Last Enemy*, so that, in effect, this reticence, by not being explicit, has its own merit and effect.

S. O'F.

THE STRANGE DEATH OF LIBERAL ENGLAND

by George Dangerfield

12/6 net.

Irish Press : " A strange, dramatic and absorbingly interesting story. Mr. Dangerfield seems to have missed nothing. He treads the intricate maze of Irish pre-war politics with an astonishing sure-footedness.

" This is an essential book for the Irish library, where it will find a place of honour beside Mr. Frank Pakenham's *Peace by Ordeal* and Mr. Geoffrey de C. Parmiter's *Roger Casement*.

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BIRD ALONE. By Sean O'Faolain. (*Cape*, 7s. 6d.).

The scene of Mr. Sean O'Faolain's new novel is Cork, and the story is told by an old man, Corney Crone—Corney the Builder. But it is a story of youth—youth remembered, youth relived in imagination. It begins with Corney's childhood. His grandfather and father are builders, and they and his mother, his brothers and sister, are all living together in the Red House, an odd, feckless family, unconventional, likeable, slightly disreputable—the most important figure among them, in young Corney's eyes, being his "grander." The book comes to life instantly. The scenes of childhood, the glimpses of home, the glimpses of school, have a delightful warmth and intimacy. The family squabbles and reconciliations, the friends coming and going, the pictures of town and country, all are vividly real, and given with a personal note that deepens their charm and brings them very close to us. In these surroundings Corney grows up, and with the dawn of adolescence falls in love with Elsie Sherlock. It is a tragic romance, beautiful and clean, yet by force of circumstance the lovers are driven into conflict both with the Church and society. Elsie has the beliefs and principles of Catholicism in her blood; she cannot escape from or renounce them. Corney is a rebel, determined to gain freedom. But though she yields to him she remains haunted by the consciousness of sin. It cannot quench her love, but it can spoil it, and in the end brings disaster.

The story is unfolded with a fine imaginative spirit. It begins quietly, but gathers strength and sweeps on to an inevitable climax. Then it breaks off and, with a sense of awakening, we are back again with the old man—lonely and sad, yet resigned.

FORREST REID.

A WEEK BY THE SEA. By Bryan Guinness. (*Putnam*, 7s. 6d.).

I do not know whether Mr. Guinness has an admiration for Charles Dickens, but there is, in *Sketches by Boz*, a tale called *Passage in the Life of Mr. Watkins Tottle* which strikes a note very much in harmony with *A Week by the Sea*—certainly with the humour of it. But Mr. Guinness does not (and it is rather a pity, because his metal needs a stiffening alloy) write in the hearty hammer-and-tongs style of Boz. Take that incident in his novel where Mr. Groats plays the buffoon for a bet among the pierrots, while a party of blind boys looks on. Dickens would have sucked that lemon until we squeezed our eyes with pain; and if we are going to have sentiment then, shiver-our-timbers, let us have it full and strong. So, this love-story of elderly Egar Tipping, the married organist, and Miss Esther Dosey, the silly young thing, come for a week to the seaside, plays mostly on the Cruikshankish note of whimsicality (as the names suggest—Tipping the organist, Ponder the trombone-player, Mr. Jaques the sad parson, Mr. Groats (who is very granular and desiccated indeed), and these notes build up a comic fugue, tender and kindly, sympathetic to folly, never more grey than an evening mist, hovering on the periphery of emotions that they never fully awaken, leaving us in the end with a smile hovering about our lips and a feeling that we have been in contact with a personality of genuine charm.

F. D.

SEA WINDS. By Nora Lloyd. (*Nelson*, 7s. 6d.).

A very pleasing novel of a fortnight spent on an island off the East coast of Ireland. The setting is lyrical, and its compression—two strangers, Dr. O'Farrell and his fourteen year-old daughter, and three lighthouse-keepers—gives a satisfying sense of economy. The inter-relations of the young girl, blossoming out of childhood, and the three men, especially Leary the silent misanthrope, keep the human interest going. But one admires most the natural background. The description of the birds beating against the glare of the lamp is as tender and vivid as a poem; while Dr. O'Farrell teaching the men to sing *The Messiah* is splendid stuff in another key. The psychology—to use a hateful word (though character-drawing is little better) might be tuned up a little. Novels play at concert-pitch.

S. O. F.

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

SEAN O'SULLIVAN, R.H.A., *whose cover design proudly survives all mutations of colour.*

AN PHILIBIN *once again graces our pages.*

OWEN S. SKEFFINGTON, B.A. (T.C.D.), *whose sapient analyses justify a certain amount of hard hitting.*

PROFESSOR MICHAEL TIERNEY, Professor of Greek, University College, Dublin.
One of the most energetic of our young professors.

EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A., *restricts his treatment owing to vastness of his material on this subject.*

DONAGH MACDONAGH *has to his credit, amongst other published work, a book of poems in collaboration with Niall Sheridan.*

PROFESSOR HUGH O. MEREDITH, Queen's, Belfast, *already familiar to our readers, presents in perhaps unorthodox vein the germ of a thought-provoking controversy.*

BULMER HOBSON, *author of works on the Irish Volunteers, Afforestation, Monetary Theories, etc., presents an angle here with which we completely agree.*

DAVID QUINN, PH.D., *Lecturer in Colonial History, University College, Southampton, from whose pen we hope shortly to offer a more substantial, if less idealistic, contribution.*

PETER O'DONOVAN, *an earnest Chestertonian, who has epitomised our own feelings in this tribute.*

FRANK O'CONNOR—*First Guests of the Nations, then Saint and Mary Kate then Bones of Contention, finally as if proof of poetic feeling were needed—Three Old Brothers and soon, rumour has it, a biography of a name that breathes magic in many an Irish home.*

"MAN FROM THE NORTH" *perforce conceals the identity of a well-known Belfast professional man—new to our pages.*

THE HON. F. A. PAKENHAM *has had again regretfully to fail us, the cause as already explained having been the subject recently of questions in England's House of Commons.*

JOHN DOWLING, B.A., B.D.S., *has an unerring instinct for the significant, a term fully applicable to the work of the Haverly Trust.*

EAMONN O GALLCOBHAI, *as composer, can speak competently as well as feelingly, on this important matter of criticism.*

SEAN O MEADHRA *includes in this issue a brief note on his own dramatic progeny.*

LIAM O LAOGHAIRE, *from whom we can promise a most interesting communication next month on the documentary film.*

SEAN O FAOLAIN *whose Bird Alone is enjoying almost a succès fou has recruited a brilliant array of reviewers.*